

Encounter

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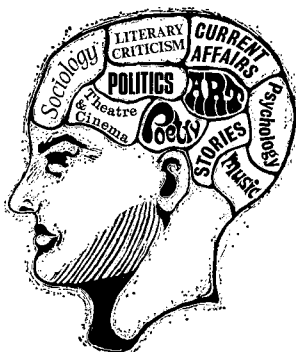
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To Our Readers



IT IS, we know, rather tiresome but none the less real to go on every three or four years about the problem of "survival."

ENCOUNTER has to live, for better or worse, by its wits. Its readers are devoted, its advertisers remain loyal. But the editorial life is a dangerous one in inflationary times. Since the spring of this year, when our publishing relationship with Open Court was suddenly (but honourably) terminated, we have been on our own, trying to make ends meet. The difficulties are great, but probably not insuperable. As one of our readers put it to us recently (he happens also to be a London bank manager), "Of course, capitalism is the worst system in the world for the running of an independent, international, intellectual review—except for all the others! . . . Other highbrow editors have to face commissars, you only have to face us. . . ." Bankruptcy, he was hinting, was less disagreeable than concentration camp; it was, at the moment, a small consolation.

But we took the hint. And we have, accordingly, with great regret raised our prices beginning with this number. We hope to be able to count on the loyalty and devotion of our readers. And if they are so moved, they can help enormously by renewing their subscriptions for the next year now, and perhaps donating a Christmas subscription* or two to a student or a local library. We know that in some areas (our list embraces subscribers in 94 countries around the world) there have been delays and complications; we acknowledge the complaints of various readers, especially in the USA, with heavy heart (but with some sneaking pride: after all they want their monthly copies) and assure them that, after the chaos of "going independent" in the spring, we are beginning to manage the problems of our new business burdens. Things, now that we are doing it all by hand in London, are improving.

We are especially grateful, in this time of crisis, for the support of Freedom House in New York. Its Trustees, directors and its staff gave us aid and advice, without which our campaign for supporters would have been so much more difficult. Among the supporters have been many of our own writers who have contributed generous donations, as well as a number of admirably un-bureaucratic American and European foundations (including, we are happy to report as we go to press, the Arts Council of Great Britain).

Survival, the poet said, is all. We continue to prefer to deal with disagreeably numerate bank managers than ideologised smilers with a knife. But if any of our readers have any brilliant, or even only practical, ideas as to how to make ends meet, we would be happy to hear from them. Meanwhile new subscriptions—old renewals—pages of advertising—and indeed grants, stipends and donations, or enlightened patronage of any sort—are all most welcome.

M.J.L.

* See pages 39-42

The Blow is Still Inside Him

I HAVE CONSULTED the tide table. The tide will still be out at eleven O'clock."

Gilbert Edgeley's tongue, active behind his closed lips, hunted down the crumbs of toast from his gums. His wife watched it travelling dexterously round his mouth, bulging a cheek here, pausing to investigate a tooth there; that remorseless scavenging tongue.

Every day she decided in advance that she wouldn't look; just as at the moment when he was about to say "O'clock", she would quickly turn off her mind. Switch off, just switch off, she said to herself. Slowly she relaxed her shoulders.

"Gilbert", she said.

"My dear?"

"Gilbert, what time?" (Oh God, it was the ivory tooth-pick now.) "What sort of time, Gilbert, do we need to . . . I'll have to get the children ready and do the shop . . . I'll have to get in a few things for. . ."

"The picnic, I presume you mean, Celia", said her husband, who was folding his table-napkin into an impeccable rectangle that could be rolled and slipped smoothly into the silver ring with his initials that he insisted on bringing away even on holiday.

"What I mean is, Gilbert", she said, "It's getting on a bit now and what with the holiday crowds in the shops, would just fruit do and cheese? We had ham yesterday, at least I think. . . . Does it matter, Gilbert, do you mind what we have? Does it, Gil? We can be ready if we hurry . . . Emma!" (That child's hair! she thought, looking at her daughter across the table.) "Emma, you'll help me, won't you, Emma my love? Then we can be back here at half past ten, Gilbert, and we can be down at the beach by. . ."

"Eleven O'clock", said Gilbert. "Christopher, have you your mother's permission to leave the table, or for that matter mine, though I appreciate that that is of little consequence."

"Sorry, Mum", said Christopher. Although he was fifteen he had been playing a favourite childish game: organising the crumbs on his plate into armies of hostile ants bent on mutual destruction. As the white had just massacred the red, he had pushed back his chair. Now he rose to his feet and picked up his plate and his cup and saucer.

"Christopher, we are no longer at home where penury compels us to perform these menial services. We are at this moment staying in A boarding house" (he pronounced the words with the exaggerated respect of profound contempt), "and no doubt the good lady who runs it will be pleased to clear the table. In the meantime. . ."

"Dad-dy", said Ben scrambling off his chair and on to his father's knees.

Dear, dear Ben, breathed Celia, gazing across at her four-year-old son. How does he always get it right? How does he know? Now it would all be all right. She used to dread the day when Ben would be cast into outer darkness with the rest of them, herself, Chris and Emma, but the day never seemed to come. She blessed Ben with all the love she had left because he could so often save them all so simply, so unerringly, as he was doing now, for Gilbert had gathered him up in his arms together with the sugar-bowl and they were feeding the ponies that came up to the fence at the bottom of the garden.

"Emma dearest", she said and more loudly, "Emma!"

When Emma looked at you it was as if you weren't there or worse, as if you'd done something unspeakable and been quietly dismissed. "Lives in a world of her own", "Daydreams" said her reports and the headmistress had wondered whether perhaps a psychiatrist. . .

"Emma, go and tidy your room, my darling, and then you can help me do the shopping. We're going to the beach today. You like the beach."

Emma scooped back the tendrils of hair that fell across her face and hitched them abstractedly behind her ear. She got down from the table and disappeared.

"Mum, do I have to go to the beach? I wanted to go sailing with Nick. They're only here for another day. I won't get another chance."

"Oh Christopher, please!"

He knew that tone. He knew he was to be the sacrificial victim; he knew she daren't stand up to his father though he knew too that she would have liked him to be free. He could have faced his father himself but he could hear the reply: "My boy, the good Lord has endowed you with what some are disposed to describe as free will, though whether the term is strictly in accordance with. . . ." and so on and so forth, and by the time he'd finished, whatever he'd wanted to do would seem different, like a bright day when a cloud suddenly passes over the sun. Besides, if he did ask his father, his mother would catch it. "Your son, my dear, seems indisposed to give us the pleasure of his company, I wonder whether. . . ." How could a woman be like that, to be kicked around? And she was getting worse. She never seemed to finish a sentence now and the more she dithered, O God! the more he was ready with the big guns. You'd have said he enjoyed it, waited for it, wanted it. Why were people like that? He'd heard it said that his father ought by now to be a "silk." If a barrister was any good they made him one. The law, his father in court, to be there in the dock, his father in his wig, hear the sentences unfold, roll upon roll: damned, damned, damned!

"I'm sorry, Chris. Really I'm . . . there'll be another time. Please Chris, you do understand?"

Understand! He didn't answer and left her there, though when he got outside the door he wanted to go back and say something kind, but hell, she was spoiling his day. He flung out of the house and down to the quay to look for Nick and tell him he couldn't go. And I'll look a proper charlie, he thought. Nick's all right because he knows but his father'll think I'm wet. "What, your old man cut up rough has he? Bad luck, old sod!" That would be it. Other people's parents! One day he'd try and think it out.

It was well past eleven and they still hadn't set out. It meant taking the car because the bit of beach that Gilbert liked was a mile distant where you could cross the channel at low water, walk across to the dunes at the edge of the marsh and look for birds.

GILBERT EDGELEY sat with perfect composure in the car outside the guest house while Ben amused himself tilting his father's sea-grass hat on to his nose. Gilbert smiled as if mesmerised by the child's touch, while Ben slowly ran a finger up the back of his father's head till the hat toppled again and again and again and Ben chortled ecstatically.

"O Gil, I'm so sorry. I think we're just about. . . Emma love, did you bring. . . Oh thanks, Christopher, put it in the back with the other . . . no there. . . Yes all right then. . . We're not too late are we, Gilbert? Gilbert, we're not all that late?"

Her husband silently reached over and re-closed the car door that she had failed to fasten and switched on the ignition. He looked at his watch. They set off. Nobody spoke.

"No", he said sharply as Ben tried the hat trick again and Ben, unruffled, clambered on to Emma's lap and began to rub noses with her. Emma suffered her nose to be rubbed as she stared ahead.

"There are a lot of cars, Gilbert. We'll have to go right to the end of . . . at least we'll—Mind that child!—Oh Gilbert, it did give me a fright, didn't it you Gil? Gil? He wasn't there one minute and then . . . had you seen him, Gil? Oh Gil, supposing you hadn't seen. . . ."

"I saw the child. I avoided the child. I am a good driver. I do not make a habit of killing children, Celia. And now if you would be so good as to produce 30p for this man who appears to be a car park attendant—he happens to be on your side—we will leave the car and proceed to the beach. By my watch it is now precisely eleven forty-three."

Celia's heart was still pounding, for she was sure the child had slipped off the path and that the car had hit him, but if it had they'd have felt a bump. Would they, though? Supposing they hadn't? Supposing he really had been hit and Gilbert hadn't seen? They ought to go back to be certain, but Gilbert

had said no. Still, he might be wrong. What if the child had been stunned and he hadn't known? Gilbert never made mistakes. But supposing he had been, would he still be lying there and supposing he'd got up but was concussed and stepped out again and another car. . . .

"Gil", she said falteringly, trying to keep up with him as he took long purposeful strides across the sand towards the water, Ben bobbing up and down on his back.

"Gil, you're sure aren't you that we didn't hit that child? You don't think. . . ?"

He stood perfectly still, closed his eyes and said nothing. "It's all right, Mum, really", said Christopher. "The kid was perfectly O.K. I looked out of the back and he ran across when we were past. Really!"

Glad he could now offer the proof of love he had wanted to give before, he took the picnic bag from her and stayed close. Celia tried to ease her tense shoulders and looked round for Emma. Emma was far behind staring at shells that she was cupping in her hands.

"Oh, come on, Em", shouted Christopher, but she didn't move, so he ran back and towed her after him, her loose hair falling all over her face.

Gilbert Edgeley, with Ben holding on to his head, was standing on the edge of the water that at low tide was a clearly defined channel. As the tide flowed, however, the channel would widen until the surrounding sand-banks were covered and there would be the sea. Which is why, having read the guide-book, questioned the harbour-master, studied the tide table and remembered to make allowance for Summer Time, he had been so precise about the hour. As the others came up he spoke:

"It's a pity", he said, "we shall not now have as long over the other side as we should have had. The tide begins to flow at half-past two. I hope there will be no more delays."

Removing his rope-soled shoes and handing them to Ben, he stepped into the water in his shorts. The others followed in silence. Celia clutched her cotton skirt in a bunch and dangled her sandals in her hand but oh, she thought, as she caught sight of Emma, why does this child sometimes make me hate her? Emma had simply waded across in her jeans and shoes. That she was wet, that she was dry;

it was all the same and she was out of the water now, standing there fingering her hair. But hate her, why? I don't, of course I don't, I love her. But she knew that her daughter who was drifting away, silent, indifferent, withdrawn, was punishing her, at least she supposed that was it. She is escaping, she thought, rejecting me (or is it him, or all of us?) because it's all too much.

"Oh, do come on", shouted her husband far ahead with Christopher trailing behind scuffling up the sand. Celia put her arm guiltily round Emma's shoulders but the shoulders were impassive and her eyes gave no response.

On the dunes among the spiky marram grass they sat down raggedly and Celia got out the cheese and fruit. Christopher wandered off with his to beachcomb, Emma nibbled absent-mindedly at hers. Celia didn't eat. Gilbert had already unslung his binoculars and was training them on the small brown waders running between the shingle and the pools left by the tide. Without looking at her, he stretched out his hand for his food and began munching with elaborate thoroughness. He chased the fragments of cheese round his mouth, then sank his strong square teeth into an apple and began to chew. Like a horse, thought Celia, noise and all.

"Turnstones mostly", he said. "Ah, some oyster-catchers! Wait a minute, what's that over there? Christopher, is it a plover? By Jove, yes it is, it's a grey plover, beautiful little bird. Here, take a look."

He's almost human, thought his son, who had drifted back within earshot, he really cares. But he had no wish to humour his father, so he pretended he didn't hear and busied himself untangling the plastic kite he had found on the shingle.

His father was steadying Ben between his knees, showing him how to look through the glasses. Let him, thought Christopher. The invitation so quickly transferred to his young brother had awakened his jealousy. He rarely acknowledged it was there. Ben was a buffer fending the old man off. It was better like that. Be independent. He got his kite airborne and ran with it like the wind that was holding it up.

CELIA LAY BACK in the heat. If somehow she could only unhitch her head,

get airborne like the kite. People on holiday are supposed to enjoy themselves. She listened to the hum of voices drifting across from the main beach they had left behind. Families too, most of them. You always assume, she thought, seeing people like that all together that they're normal; normal people, normal families; what was normal?

Emma, Gilbert wouldn't listen. She'd grow out of it. Thirteen, a difficult age. Didn't Celia know she was always exaggerating problems and didn't he always tell her so and then didn't it always turn out that he was right? Leave the child alone!

Chris was all right she supposed, though he'd almost given up speaking to his father and she knew she was bad for him, making him guilty in case he hurt her, sensing she'd had enough. And Ben. Dear Ben! She smiled as she found herself thinking of him, for with all his love for Gilbert he loved her too. When Gilbert was at work and the other two were at school she had him all to herself and he'd sit chatting while she made the pastry, cramming the stray ends into his mouth till she said he'd be sick. She paid him little attention when Gilbert came home. Almost in pity she let him have him all to himself, put him to bed and tell him a story. He'd lost her and Christopher and Emma. At least he had Ben and since she also had Ben, didn't that mean that somehow, in spite of everything, they still had each other?

Celia dozed and presently was awakened by the sound of Gilbert's voice.

"Time to go back", he shouted, shouldering Ben. "Where's Christopher?"

"He had a kite. . . ."

"I know he had a kite. D'you think I'm blind! I bring him here to show him these birds, it makes me sick! Does he think he can see grey plover in Hampstead! A boy of fifteen flying a kite! Where the hell is he?"

"I don't know, Gilbert, I think he went that way", said Celia vaguely. She had barely registered her son, only noting the orange kite that soared in the wind.

"My God", he fumed striding up to the top of the dunes, "where the hell's he gone?"

Celia quite liked him to swear because it seemed to make him more human, but he only swore when he was really worried and it crossed her mind now that he had been so interested in the birds that he had only just

remembered about the tide. He disappeared round the bend in the shingle ridge and Celia wandered over to Emma who had made what looked like a garden with shells.

"Is it a garden, my love?" she asked. Emma stared at the shells and didn't answer. I'm meant to know, thought Celia. She thinks I'm a fool.

TIME PASSED, and then there was Gilbert rounding the bend, taking great righteous strides, and Christopher with a flushed face just behind him.

"Come on", he said and they began to make for the channel. "Celia, will you tell your daughter to please come ON", he said, his voice tight and hard.

"Em", said Christopher, "come on! We've got to get across or it'll be too late."

Seeing her dreaming over her shells, he seized her hand and pulled her along as he had done before.

It will be all right, said Celia to herself. Gilbert never made mistakes; that was what was unendurable. It was she who was always wrong. Everything I think and feel and do, she thought, he makes me feel it's wrong. She had sometimes felt a special kind of certainty, felt it without thinking so that it seemed wholly part of her, and when he had proved conclusively that it couldn't be right, it was a kind of death, like losing a baby.

Here they were, then, back at the channel; but even she could see it was not the same. It was nearly double the width and in the middle were little curling eddies borne along on the flow. Her husband was looking at it darkly, measuring it like an adversary. Christopher looked from him to her. She hadn't seen what had happened back there on the far sands when his father had found him, the rage that had seemed to split open his face, the ominous pallor round his mouth. For some reason he hadn't struck him. The blow is still inside him, he thought, it's still inside.

Gilbert frowned. "It can't be very deep yet", he said. "Of course it's coming in and if we hadn't been delayed by people's lack of consideration we should have been across by now. If we hold on to one another we shall be all right. Here, take my hand. Oh Celia, don't be such a fool, come on! Christopher, will

you please look after Emma.”

“But Dad. . . .”

“I said look after Emma and keep your head. It’s all your fault we’re as late as this. Come on!” And he waded in. Then he turned to grasp his wife’s hand but she started back.

“Gilbert, no! Stay here and we’ll call for help. Someone’s bound to see!”

“The coastguard’s got his look-out on the top of those dunes”, said Christopher, “he’ll see us in a minute. Wait a bit and wave.”

“Yes, let’s wave. Let’s all wave and shout as loud as we can. Gilbert, let’s all wave. . . .”

“You’re a fool and your son is a coward. I’m going across. I’ll get hold of a boat if that’s what you want!”

The blow, thought Christopher, is a red thing beating in his head. If he’d only hit me!

“Ben”, shouted Celia as he waded in deeper, “leave Ben with us. Gilbert, leave Ben with me!”

But he didn’t turn, up to his thighs now in the water, feeling his way. She moaned.

“It’s all right, Mum. He’ll make it. Look!”

Over to the left, people were shouting and waving and pointing to a boat. A boatman in a blue slop was pushing it out and men were shoving it clear of the shingle bank.

“Wait!” yelled the boatman, and his voice was just audible above the babble of voices on the beach.

“Wait, Gilbert”, shouted Celia, “wait. Come back. There’s a boat on its way. Gilbert, wait!”

Now they could see that the boat was heading straight for them, the boatman aft with his hand on the tiller and the outboard motor puttering behind.

“Go back, you bloody fool”, he yelled. Ben, perched on his father’s back, caught sight of the boat and suddenly waved his arm. At the same instant, Gilbert, up to his chest now in the water, stumbled and went down. Celia screamed and threw up her arms across her face. Christopher saw the boat swirl up in a flurry of wake, the boatman cut out the engine and throw himself over the side, saw him rise to the surface, saw his father rise too, dashing the water out of his eyes.

“Where’s the child?” he screamed, “the child, for Christ’s sake find the child!”

“Ben!” shrieked Celia plunging into the water, “Ben, Ben, Ben, Ben, Ben!”

Christopher darted after her and pinioned her in her wet clinging clothes and dragged her struggling and sobbing back on to the sand. From the other side bathers were dashing into the water, a crowd had collected, the boatman had struggled out of his waders and was diving repeatedly round the spot. Now the water seemed to be full of swimmers, the boat was floating away on the tide and Christopher lost sight of his father.

Emma watched as if from a great distance; the bathing huts, the water, the people’s bright holiday clothes, the shouting and the screaming made a whirling pattern, inside which there was one still spot—herself.

IT WAS SOME TIME LATER, whether hours or minutes she couldn’t say, that Celia was aware of a boat, of a boatman, who seemed to be wet, helping her into it, and of Christopher and Emma being with her. Emma’s jeans looked wet too, and she remembered the way she had gone through the water in them. Or was that yesterday? There were people when they reached the other side who seemed to be standing about. When the boatman helped them ashore, the people parted quietly and let them through.

“Mrs Edgeley”, said a man in uniform, “we’ve got an ambulance. It’s waiting for you if you’d like to come this way.”

“An ambulance for me!” she said and laughed.

“Mum”, said Christopher squeezing her arm, “come on.”

“Where is my father?” he said suddenly to the man in uniform, and Celia, hearing him vaguely, was struck by the tone in his voice. He sounded like Gilbert.

“Your father’s in the ambulance, son.”

Christopher handed his mother into the ambulance drawn up by the steps to the beach. His father was there sitting hunched up at one end, wrapped in red blankets, his head in his hands and his wet hair dripping on the floor. Then he helped Emma in.

“Just a minute”, he said quietly to the attendant who was over busy with the door. “What about my little brother?”

The man shook his head briefly, avoiding the boy’s eyes.

“Get in, son, would you”, he said.

Milton Friedman

The Line We Dare Not Cross

The Fragility of Freedom at “60%”

THOSE OF US who have been fortunate enough to be born in the United States in the 20th century naturally take freedom for granted: it seems to us that a relatively free society is the natural state of mankind. But that is a great misconception. Freedom is very far from being the natural state of mankind: on the contrary, it is an extraordinarily unusual situation. If one looks back through history, in any place on the globe, one finds that the natural state of mankind in most periods in history has been tyranny and misery. If one looks over the globe geographically at any point in time, one finds that most of the people in the world were living in a state of tyranny and misery.

The periods and places in which there has been something approaching a free society have been few and far between. There was a small example in the 5th century, B.C., on the Peloponnesian peninsula, in Athens; but that was only a partly free society. It was a society that was free for the citizens of Athens, but not for the slaves who also inhabited the city. There is a brief spurt of freedom during the Renaissance in the Middle Ages. The most extended period of freedom has been the period in the 18th and 19th and early 20th centuries in Western Europe and the United States. Yet, look at how fragile that freedom has been. The countries in the world that have been able to maintain during that period something roughly approaching a free society are few in number. They consist almost entirely of the English-speaking and Scandinavian countries.

THIS FRAGILITY OF FREEDOM was brought home to me dramatically last year when I spent a week in a small South American country. I was in Chile as part of a group that was examining and considering the economic problems which Chile was then facing—problems which we are likely to have in our future (I hope in a very distant future). They were problems which were epitomised by the fact that they had managed after great effort to bring the rate of inflation

down from 900% a year to 400% a year.

Chile, of course, is very different; it is, for one thing, a very much poorer country than the USA. Yet the history of Chile is highly relevant to our present situation and our future problems. Of all the South American countries, Chile had about the longest history of a reasonable degree of democratic government and a reasonably free society, a history which dates back to the 19th century.

The present problems in Chile, which has lost its freedom and which today is governed by an authoritarian régime, had their origin in my opinion, some 50 or 60 years ago. Chile was not only one of the countries in South America that had the longest history of liberty and political democracy, but it was also one of the earliest countries in South America to institute a Welfare State and welfare-state measures. I was surprised to find in reading about Chile that, like Great Britain, the class of measures that we today associate with Welfare Statism, the New Deal, and the Fair Deal, got their start in Chile about 1906, 1907, or 1908, at about the same time that they started in Westminster.

The present state of Chile, in my opinion, is the end result of an expansion in the role of government over the lives of people. The important thing about that development—and the main lesson I am going to try to elaborate in this article—is that the measures that led to that result were introduced by good people for good objectives. The measures that led to Chile's crisis were not bad measures that were taken by bad people with the aim of grinding the poor under their heels. On the contrary, the problems of Chile derived from the attempt to use the State and the political mechanism to achieve high-minded objectives. That development led to an increasing expansion in the role of the State in the society, and it led to an increasing accumulation of legislation in which the government controlled what people could and could not do. The obvious numerical counterpart of this was an increase in

government spending until, by the time Salvadore Allende came to power in Chile, government spending had reached something like 40% of the national income.

Since Chile was a poor country, it was difficult to impose explicit taxes to generate revenues of 40% of national income. As a result, taxes were imposed indirectly in the form of inflation. There is a great misconception about what happened. Allende, who produced the great confrontation and was clearly seeking to turn Chile into a communist state, was only carrying out the laws that had already been enacted by his predecessors. He introduced very little that was radically different. He just continued in the same direction that policy had been proceeding, ever more rapidly, during the past 30–40 years. However, the end-result was the tipping point at which the willingness of the public to put up with increasing involvement in their own lives was exceeded. There was first, the Allende régime with its threat of a left-wing dictatorship; and then a counter-revolution with the military taking over and a military junta being established, which also is very far indeed from a free society. It, too, is an authoritarian society which denies the liberties and freedoms of the people in the sense in which Anglo-Saxon democrats conceive of them.

LEST YOU THINK that this tale of the history of Chile need not concern us, let me ask you to consider a case much closer. Cast your eyes across the Atlantic to the home of most of the ideas of freedom that we cherish—to the United Kingdom. Britain is a much richer country than Chile. It has a far stronger tradition of a belief in freedom and in democratic rights. Yet, the UK is going down the same path as Chile and, I fear, is headed for the same end. It is almost impossible for any one of us brought up in the great traditions emanating from Great Britain—the noble tradition of freedom and of democratic rights starting with the Magna Carta and coming down through the whole list of famous Englishmen who have written and taught us about free institutions—it is almost impossible for anyone brought up in that tradition to utter the words that Britain is in danger of losing freedom and democracy; and yet it is a fact! I was lecturing in England a year or so ago, and it was precisely because I had spent some time in the British Isles and had seen what was happening there that I was so much reminded

in Chile this spring that I was seeing the same scene over again. It was like a continuous movie, and this was where I came in. Or maybe I should say this was where I went out.

About the same time as Chile, Great Britain started on the Welfare State line. In 1913, a great English constitutional lawyer, A. V. Dicey, added a new preface to a second edition of a series of lectures he had given in America at the turn of the century under the title, *Relation Between Law and Public Opinion in the Nineteenth Century*. In this preface, referring to the measures that Britain had already taken by 1913, particularly in the area of old-age benefits and of the treatment of people in institutions, he said:

“This is a road on which no reasonable man can refuse to enter, but once entered nobody can tell where it is going to lead.”

That was an extraordinarily prescient prediction of what was in store for Britain because the role of the government has, from that point to this, expanded until today (again by that simple numerical measure that I used) total government spending in Great Britain (central and local) amounts to some 60% of the national income.

And yet, there is enormous pressure for still more government spending. Nobody is satisfied; everybody is dissatisfied. Society is being polarised. It is hard to see how Britain can avoid the fate that Chile experienced. Lest I seem singularly alarmist, I can also cite Eric Sevareid, who in one of his broadcast commentaries over the network after a visit to Britain, made exactly this analogy (“Britain is on the verge of the Allende period of Chile”). I fear very much that the odds are at least 50–50 that within the next five years British freedom and democracy, as we have seen it, will be destroyed.

BUT, AGAIN, I NEED NOT GO THAT FAR AWAY. Let me come closer to home. Consider at the moment New York City.

New York City displays precisely the same trends as Chile and the United Kingdom. New York City has the dubious distinction of having the most Welfare-State-oriented electorate in the country. It has been following the same policy of ever-growing governmental involvement in the affairs of its citizens and the result has been exactly the same. Wherever this path has been followed, whether in Chile or in the UK or in New York, it has two consequences. The first is financial crisis. That clearly characterised the situation in Chile. That clearly characterises

the situation in the UK where the rate of inflation reached something over 25%; where the government budget is enormously in deficit; where Britain is able to survive primarily by borrowing from overseas. Similarly in New York, the first effect—financial crisis—is obvious.

The second effect is less obvious. This path leads not only to financial crisis, but also to a loss of liberty and freedom; and New York City has lost its liberty and freedom. New York City is no longer being governed by the citizens of New York City or by people elected by the citizens of New York City. It is now being governed by a committee of overseers appointed by the State of New York with power to overrule the elected officials of the City of New York. This loss of self-government and freedom has been concealed by the shift of power from one democratic institution, the City of New York, to another democratic institution, the State of New York. But the principle is the same: financial crisis leads to a loss of self-government. There is only one important difference between New York City, on the one hand, and Chile or the United Kingdom on the other, and that is that New York City does not have one of those printing presses on which you can turn out green pieces of paper that people call money. It cannot issue its own money. Chile and Britain could issue their own money and therefore the financial crisis took the form of inflation; whereas in New York it degenerated more promptly to bankruptcy.

LET ME COME STILL CLOSER to home. For the period from the founding of this country to 1929, leaving aside periods of major wars such as the Civil War and the first World War and the Revolution, total government spending in the United States (Federal State and local), never exceeded 10% of the income of the people. State and local expenditure (more immediately subject to the control of the citizenry) was twice as large during that period as Federal government expenditure. Total Federal government expenditure in 1929 was 3% of the national income. In the 45 years since, total governmental expenditures have risen to 40% of the national income in the United States, and Federal government spending is twice as much as state and local spending. Federal spending today is something like 25% of the national income, or roughly 10 times as large as it was in 1929.

I submit: we have been moving in the same direction as Chile and Britain and New York, and we have been experiencing signs of financial crisis—the emergence of inflation at a higher and higher rate. We have also been experiencing the second effect: the loss of freedom.

People always talk as if the problem is in the future, as if the problem is that individual freedom is threatened by the encroaching control of our lives by the State. It is not merely the future, it is the present; for freedom has already been greatly reduced in many dimensions. After all, the spending of 40% of our income for us by government is a restriction on our freedom. We have nothing to say about that 40% except through the political process (to which I will come in a moment). But put aside the question of income. Go to those more fundamental freedoms of speech, of belief, of personal behaviour, for they, too, have been severely restricted. Consider for a moment the simple question of freedom of speech. Let me ask this: how often does one read in the papers any statement on public issues by a major businessman or industrialist except where it immediately concerns his own enterprise?

A little over a year ago, President Ford constructed a programme, hastily buried shortly thereafter, called the WIN Programme (for *Whip Inflation Now*). Now it was a programme that had some good things and some bad things; but taken as a whole it was a pretty silly programme. One can search every newspaper in the USA without finding a single major businessman who made a public statement against that programme. Why? Was it because they agreed with it? It is inconceivable; at least it is inconceivable that they unanimously agreed with it. Surely there was some businessman who didn't.

However, a businessman at the head of a great corporation thinks three times before he speaks out on a major public issue. He looks over his left shoulder and sees the IRS getting ready to come and audit his accounts, and he looks over his right shoulder and sees the Department of Justice standing only too ready to launch an anti-trust suit against him. And then, if he has more shoulders than two, he asks what the Federal Trade Commission is going to do about his advertising; and what the FDA is going to do about the products he produces; and what is the Safety Council going to do about this, that and the other thing? You are not free to speak if you are in that position.

LET ME GET EVEN CLOSER to home. Let me get to my own area—the academy. Is the scholar free to speak? I ask myself whether the professors who teach medicine at any American medical school in this country, most of whose research is being financed by the National Institutes of Health, whether they really feel free to speak out against “socialised medicine” and against further involvement of the government in medicine. Some of them obviously will. But is there the slightest doubt, to use those famous words of the Supreme Court, that their dependence for the major source of their financing on the Federal Government has a “chilling effect” on the freedom of speech? About the only people who now have full freedom of speech are people in the fortunate position that I am in—a tenured professor at a major private academic institution on the verge of retirement.

The Department of Health, Education and Welfare in Washington seeks to impose on educational institutions requirements that, in my opinion, would interfere severely and seriously with scholarly performance. Every academic institution in the United States is threatened in exactly the same way. If it were not so serious, it would be humorous because there is no group in this country that has done more to bring this upon themselves than the academic community. We have been in the forefront in persuading the public at large that the doctrine of individual responsibility is a false doctrine; that the source of all good things is “Big Brother” in Washington. We only complain when it comes home and hits us.

LET ME MOVE FROM DESCRIPTION to analysis. What is the explanation? Why does the attempt to use the political market to achieve noble objectives go awry and destroy our freedom? Why does it happen? In the simplest form, the fundamental fallacy of the Welfare State which leads to both financial crisis and the destruction of freedom is the attempt to do good at somebody else’s expense. That is the fundamental fallacy. First, nobody spends somebody else’s money as carefully as he spends his own. That is why trying to do good at someone else’s expense leads to financial crisis.

Second, if you are going to do good at somebody else’s expense, you have to take the money away from him. So force, coercion, destruction of freedom is at the very bottom, at the very

source, of the attempts to do good at somebody else’s expense. Some years ago, in an article published in the *New York Times Magazine*, John Kenneth Galbraith said that there was no problem in New York City which would not be solved if the city government’s budget was doubled. In the interim the city government’s budget has been quadrupled, and so have the problems. And the reason is straightforward. While the city government had *more* to spend, the citizens had *less* to spend because the government can only get the money by taking it away from somebody else.

More fundamentally, what is at the base of our problem is the failure to recognise the distinction between the political market, on the one hand, and the economic market on the other. This distinction, which I would like to develop, is one that can be expressed in various terms—my professional background leads me to put it in economic terms. The political system is a marketplace; the economic system is a marketplace. These are two different kinds of market mechanisms, and they have very different consequences. Though it may seem a paradox, the economic market is a freer, more democratic market than the political marketplace.

LET ME AT THE OUTSET put to one side a false distinction between the two markets. We tend to be misled by words. Because we speak of a person in the economic market as having a private enterprise, we think of him as serving his *private* interest. Because we speak of a government bureaucrat as being a public servant, we speak of him as serving the *public* interest. But that is an utterly false distinction. Almost every individual serves his own private interest: that interest need not be pecuniary; it need not be narrowly, physical or material. The great Saints of history have served their “private interest” just as the most money-grubbing miser has served his private interest. The *private interest* is whatever it is that drives an individual. A government bureaucrat is seeking to serve his private interest just as much as you or I or the ordinary businessman. To make this point in an extreme form, compare the manager of a Russian factory who is a public servant and the manager of an American factory who is supposedly a private employee. They both are serving their self-interest; the only difference is that the actions that will serve their self-interest are different. The American manager has to worry about

getting fired; the Soviet manager has to worry about getting fired at! And that makes a big difference in what is actually in each man's self-interest.

In exactly the same way, the bureaucrats at HEW in Washington who are trying to extend their control and impose regulations on universities and colleges throughout the land are serving their private interest. They may believe thoroughly in what they are doing, but they are none the less serving their private interest in seeking to extend the scope of their power, importance, and influence. It is a myth that there is a difference between the motives of the people who are employed in government and the people who are employed in the private sector. That is equally true of those who are competing for votes—for the legislators are competing one with another, competing for votes, and it is in their private interest to do those things which will get them enough votes to get elected.

A second myth about the political market is that, as opposed to the economic market in which individuals vote with dollars, in the political market there is One-Person/One-Vote. That is true on a formal level, but it is obviously false on a realistic level. It is a system in which there is highly-weighted voting, in which some people have an enormously greater influence on the political outcome than others. This is obvious in all sorts of ways and one need only take the most dramatic example at the moment. We have a great dispute in this country about "Forced Bussing." Whatever may be said for or against it, there is not the slightest doubt that 80–90% of both Whites and Blacks in this country are opposed to forced bussing. Yet we have it, and we are going to continue to have it. How can one explain that on the basis of One-Person/One-Vote?

There is a highly-weighted voting system, and an analysis of the political market must investigate why it exists. Is the problem with the political market that there are "wicked people"? No, the individuals who operate in the political market are just as wicked or just as noble as the individuals who operate in the economic market. They are the same people. The difference is the structure of the market. It is that the political market is a system under which all decisions have to be *yes* or *no*.

THE FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE between the political market and the economic

market is that in the political market there is very little relation between what you vote for and what you get. In the economic market you get what you vote for. Let me give you a very trivial example of the kind of thing that I have in mind.

Let us suppose the question at issue is whether neckties should be red or green. If that is going to be decided by a political mechanism, everybody votes. If 51% of the people vote that ties shall be red, 100% of the people get red neckties. In the economic market each one of us goes to the shopping centre separately. If 51% of the people vote that ties shall be red, 51% get red neckties and 49% get green neckties. Everybody gets what he votes for—and this is a fundamental difference between the two markets.

There are some things for which the vote has to be *Yes* or *No*: things which are the appropriate function and role of government. There is no way in which 51% of the people in the United States can be at war in Viet Nam and 49% of the people can be not at war—that is precisely the kind of a decision that has to be decided through a mechanism which permits a *Yes/No* vote. The problem is that we have extended the political market beyond things of that kind and to the kind of things where it is possible for each person to get what he votes for, where we do not have to have a *Yes* or *No* decision. If you have a *Yes* or *No* decision, then there is almost always a very loose or no relation between your vote and the result. As a consequence, you do not in general have any incentive to examine thoroughly the issue you vote on, *i.e.*, to vote intelligently. In the political market this phenomenon leads to weighted voting in favour of *special* interests and opposed to the *general* interest. If I have some piece of legislation that is going to benefit a small group a great deal, the members of that small group have a real incentive to learn about the issue, to bring pressure on their legislators to lobby for it in Washington. The rest of us? Here is something which is going to mean millions of dollars separately to each of a small number of people, but to you and me it means 50 cents extra on our tax bill. What incentive do we have to find out about it or to spend any time voting intelligently? or to bring pressure on our legislators?

A FEW VERY SIMPLE EXAMPLES. About three or four years ago the then President Nixon tried to eliminate a programme under which the Federal government had for many years been subsidising

people who tasted tea. This is literally true. This is a programme under which the government graded tea for the benefit of importers, and we paid taxes to hire people to taste the tea and decide what grade it should get. It is very hard to see any general public interest in that—after all, the tea industry can provide those people. Nixon made the simple, obvious proposal that we should eliminate it. We still have that programme because the people in the tea industry were up in arms about it; they didn't want to have that little item taken away from them. Is there anybody in the vast American electorate who would take his vote away from a representative because that representative voted to keep the tea-tasting arrangement?

Let me offer a more important case. We have a US postal system which I would hardly suppose is distinguished for its efficiency. For many years I have been urging the elimination of the monopoly privileges of the Post Office: opening it up to competition. About a dozen years ago, I talked to a good friend of mine who was then in Congress to urge him to introduce a one-sentence Bill eliminating the monopoly privileges of the Post Office. He said to me; "You know I agree with you completely, but can you name me an organised group that will come and testify in favour of that bill? I know about the organised groups that will be there to testify against it. There will be the postal employees union; there will be the organisation of newspapers and of magazines who will testify against that bill. . . ." And he went down the list. All of those organised groups would testify against it. The people who are benefited don't even know that they would be benefited. If you eliminated the monopoly of the Post Office, there would develop a viable active private industry carrying mail. Some of my young students and friends might at some time be employed in such an industry, but do they know it? Are they going to go down to Washington to campaign in favour of that bill? Not a chance of it. "So", he said, "there is not a chance in the world of getting that bill through. It's just a waste of my energy and time to move in that direction. . . ."

MANY YEARS AGO an ex-president of General Motors testified before Congress and was so injudicious as to make the statement, "What's good for General Motors is good for the country." My colleagues at the university

hooted and scorned him for such a self-serving statement. But then the next day they were taking airplanes to Washington to testify before Congress that what was good for Higher Education was good for the country. Was there one among them who saw the irony and the inconsistency?

Each of us separately will try to use the government mechanism to get special benefits for ourselves.

Again, going back to that episode last year before the WIN Programme was instituted, President Ford had a summit meeting at which people from around the country came together on the subject of inflation. I heard one representative of special interests after another get on the platform and say, "What this country needs to stop inflation is to cut down government spending . . . and the way to cut down government spending is to spend more on me." That was a universal refrain from the farmers, the trade unions, the business delegates, the representatives of the universities.

Here is the fundamental defect of the political mechanism: it is a system of highly weighted voting under which the special interests have great incentive to promote their own interests at the expense of the general public. The benefits are concentrated; the costs are diffused; and you have therefore a bias in the market place which leads to ever greater expansion in the scope of the government and ultimately to control over the individual. The way to get elected to Congress or to the Presidency is not really to appeal to the general interest. A majority decides, but it is a special kind of majority. The way to get elected is by putting together a coalition of special interests. You go to a group that has 5% of the vote and say, "I will vote for what you want if you don't care what else I do." And they say, "Oh, I don't care what else you do." You go on to another 5%, and in this way you are well on your way to assembling 51%.

THE CHARACTERISTICS of the economic market are very different. The fundamental point is the one I mentioned before. In the economic market—the market in which individuals buy and sell from one another—each person gets what he pays for. There is a dollar-for-dollar relationship. Therefore, you have an incentive proportionate to the cost to examine what you are getting. If you are paying out of your own pocket for something and not out of somebody else's pocket, then you have a very strong incentive to

see whether you are getting your money's worth. In addition, nobody can get money from you in the economic market unless you agree. There is nobody who can put his hand in your pocket without your permission. In the political market that is the standard way of financing everything. As a consequence, you have in the economic market true individual freedom and a true individual incentive to get what you vote for and, more importantly, the incentive to find out whether what you are getting is what you voted for and is proportional to the cost to you.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM of Western society, of a society like ours, is that millions and millions of people must cooperate with one another for their daily bread. Fundamentally, there are only two ways in which large groups of people can be induced to cooperate with one another. One way is the method of the army, through force and coercion and direct order. The General tells the Colonel, the Colonel tells the Major, who tells the Lieutenant, and so on down to the private. The other way is through voluntary cooperation among people, each of whom is separately pursuing his own interest. In fact, the first method cannot work. The world is simply too complicated: there are too many facts of special time and place for it to be possible to run any complicated system on the basis of direct order. So that, in fact, all systems of cooperation among large groups of people involve a mixture of these two. But it makes an enormous difference what the mixture is. You know, it is like the old German restaurant joke about *Hasenfleffer*—"half horse, half rabbit" *i.e.*, one horse, one rabbit. The character of our society is fundamentally determined by whether the horse is the political market and the rabbit the economic market, or the other way around. Paradoxically, therefore, the situation is that the economic market is a more effective means for achieving political democracy than is a political market.

Let me add one more word on that. When we think of the economic market and the political market we tend to think in narrow terms. We tend to think of the economic market as concerned with the mundane, material things: producing bread or cheese, or automobiles or houses. But the principles I have described apply

much more broadly. The private market, the economic market, is also the most effective means for doing good. If one goes back to the period in the United States when we had the most unrestricted operation of the free private market, the 19th century, it was also the period of the greatest burst of eleemosynary and charitable activity in the history of our country. My own University of Chicago, and many of the other colleges and universities of this country, were established at that time by the private market arrangement; namely, by voluntary cooperation among people spending their own money for something they themselves believed in—to establish a university or a college. The great system of public libraries (the Carnegie Libraries) was established during that period. That was a period that saw the birth of the private eleemosynary hospital, of the foreign medical missions, of the societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, etc. Name a charitable activity, and in almost every case its origins go back to that time. So the private market—what I described as the economic market of voluntary cooperation—is, in my opinion, the most efficient and effective way of doing good as well as the most effective way of organising economic activity.

AMERICA, not unlike other Western societies, is coming to a crossroads. We cannot continue along the road we have been going. In going from 10% of the national income being spent by government to 40% it was possible to maintain a large element of freedom and individual liberty because it was possible to give large benefits to small groups at small costs spread over many people. But one thing we can be sure of: in the next forty years we cannot go from 40% to 160%.

At that crossroads is the problem that faced Chile which as a poor country tipped over at 40%. Britain is wealthier, but appears on the verge of tipping over at 60%. We still have some ruin left in us, but pretty soon we are going to be forced to face up to the issue. Where we go from here depends on the new generation that is going to determine the future, on whether in time it comes to recognise that this is a false road which leads to tyranny and misery, and not to freedom. Let me propose that as we contemplate that future, we take as our major motto what I would like to see as an eleventh commandment—that everyone shall be free to do good at his own expense.

George Watson

Race & the Socialists

On the Progressive Principle of Revolutionary Extermination

THE RACIAL INTERESTS of early socialist thinkers have already been scrutinised. It now seems less paradoxical than it once did to contemplate the post-War emigration policies of the Soviet Union, or the anti-Semitism of Black Panthers in the United States and “Red Army Fraction” militants in West Germany, or electoral collaboration in Great Britain in the 1970s between Mr Enoch Powell and the Labour Party. For that matter, it is no longer easy to be confident that Hitler’s title for his National Socialist movement was either hypocritical or inaccurate.

But existing studies of the subject suffer from several limitations, which I list here mainly in the hope of escaping them.¹

First, they have almost always assumed that racial theories are absurd, even criminally absurd; so that they have usually been exercises in moral indignation as much as scholarly enquiries.

Second, they have usually supposed that “race” and its compounds, for the Victorians, meant much what it means for the 20th century. This has led to conceptual muddles and to misinterpretations of 19th-century texts.²

Third, they have emphasised Jewry almost to the exclusion of other issues.

¹ See, for instance, Edmund Silberner, *The Anti-Semitic Tradition in Modern Socialism* (Jerusalem, 1953) and *Sozialisten zur Judenfrage* (Berlin, 1962); George Lichtheim, “Socialism and the Jews”, *Dissent* (New York, July-August 1968), mainly on 19th-century France; and Robert S. Wistrich, “Karl Marx and the Jewish Question”, *Soviet Jewish Affairs* 4 (1974). I am grateful, in addition, for the advice of Dr. W. H. Chaloner and Dr. W. O. Henderson. See their “Marx/Engels & Racism” in *ENCOUNTER*, July 1974.

² For example, Christine Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race* (London, 1971), amply documented as it is from periodical and travel literature, assumes that all racial theories are mere prejudice or “primitive superstitions”, that the word “race” always refers to genetic difference, and that racialism is essentially a right-wing affair.

Fourth, they have concentrated on France and Germany, including those German expatriates Marx and Engels. I shall concentrate here on England, including Marx and Engels as immigrants.

As for the alleged criminal absurdity of racialism, this is a question where neutrality can be found easy, indeed almost unavoidable, especially when it is based on a genuine and total agnosticism. I simply do not know, or know of any way of ascertaining, whether one race is superior to another. Consider, as an instance, the impressively vexed question of the relative intelligence of blacks and whites. If experts could one day devise intelligence tests that were widely accepted as accurate, and were to examine a wide sample of both races living in broadly similar educational circumstances in (say) Detroit or Wolverhampton, then I do not know, and cannot even guess, whether the resulting averages of intelligence would be similar or not. That is what neutrality and agnosticism mean here. If positive conclusions in this form are what racialism is about, then the existing evidence does not clearly encourage either racialism or anti-racialism; and this neutrality, accompanied as it should be by some analytical coolness, may present argumentative advantages. Not that anyone is under any obligation to be cool all the time. The neutral is in no way bound to deny himself the indignation of a decent man when confronted with instances of racialist (or anti-racialist) intolerance—whether in the field of immigration policy, for instance, or in the refusal of an experimental scientist to consider evidence that might prove politically unpalatable.

THE CONCEPTUAL MUDDLES that afflict the subject, historically considered, are more complicated, and they call for a more extended analysis. The problem is at once lexical and logical. As a lexical matter, “racialism” and “racialist” are

not recorded in English in the 19th century; the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives "racialism" first in 1907, and "racialist" only in its Supplement, cited under 1930. ("Racial", on the other hand, is recorded as early as 1862.) "Racism" and "racist" are fairly recent American formations which are essentially synonymous, and British usage may still choose to assimilate them or not.

THE LOGICAL PROBLEM is twofold. First, it would not have been a necessary assumption in Victorian debate, as it has commonly become since the 1930s, that an interest in racial differences involves any conviction in favour of the superiority of one's own. One might hold racial views, as more than one Victorian intellectual did, which maintained the superiority of another race—if not a total superiority, then one that operated at least in some vital respect. George Eliot's admiration for the Jews and Matthew Arnold's for the Celts are instances of what I have called bright as opposed to dark racial theory.³ In this view, other races have something to teach us. But nobody in the 20th century seems to use racialism to mean this. As a matter of ordinary observation, the word nowadays can only refer to a doctrine that sees other races as inferior to one's own.

The second logical problem lies in the contrast between the genetic and the cultural. An interest in race since the 1930s has commonly meant a version of genetic theory concerning such hereditary strengths and weaknesses as intelligence or stupidity, physical prowess or its absence. This is a possible Victorian usage, but not the commonest. The commonest Victorian sense of "race" and its compounds refers to a community of culture, where community can mean a unit as small as the family or as large as an empire, and where culture can refer to a language, an artistic inheritance, a religion, or any combination of these. Tennyson uses the word in all these senses: here is an instance, from *In Memoriam* (1850), of the most confined of all senses, to mean a family:

*As sometimes in a dead man's face,
To those that watch it more and more,
A likeness hardly seen before
Comes out—to some one of his race*

Winston Churchill, who was born in 1874, was

³ See my account of the "bright" side of Victorian racial ideas in *The English Ideology* (1973), pp. 205 f.

perhaps the last British statesman to use the word in its Victorian sense of a cultural community, and he continued to do so until his retirement from public life in the 1960s; his last book, an abridgement of his *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, appeared some months before his death as *The Island Race* (1964). The cultural use of the word was the predominant use in Victorian English.

It was also the most richly charged. The supreme difficulty for the twentieth-century mind in encountering that of the nineteenth in this matter is to understand that, to many or most Victorians, contempt for the cultural attributes of race was likely to be more hurtful, and harder to forgive, than contempt for genetic composition. This shift of emphasis was to have curious consequences. It was the movement of interest towards the genetic in the 1930s and '40s that left old-fashioned anti-Semites like T. S. Eliot in so embarrassed a position. They had embraced a view before the first World War which, after 1933, they were forced to contemplate in the light of events they had neither willed nor predicted. "The worst thing about Hitler", a friend of Eliot's once remarked, "was that he made an intelligent anti-Semitism impossible for a generation." Victorian views about other races, when hostile or critical, are more often like his than Hitler's. They criticise the cultural values of another community.

MANY VICTORIANS would have thought genetic theories like Robert Knox's in *The Races of Men* (1850), or Sir Francis Galton's views about hereditary talent within families, as remotely bookish and scarcely hurtful to anyone. What the London Ethnological Society deliberated at its meetings was of very distant concern to ordinary Victorians, and even to most Victorian intellectuals. Knox's theories, and Galton's, were scientific speculations, not assertions about life as it is lived. It was only when you attacked the religious and ethical convictions of a minority in your midst that you began to give the most serious offence. Consider Dickens's letter of 10 July 1863 to a Jewish lady, Mrs Eliza Davis, who had complained to him about the character of Fagin. This is Dickens's self-defence:

Fagin in *Oliver Twist* is a Jew, because it unfortunately was true of the time to which that story refers, that that class of criminal almost invariably was a Jew. But surely no sensible man or woman of

your persuasion can fail to observe—firstly, that all the rest of the wicked *dramatis personae* are Christians; and secondly, that he is called “The Jew” not because of his religion, but because of his race. If I were to write a story in which I pursued a Frenchman or a Spaniard as “the Roman Catholic”, I should do a very indecent and unjustifiable thing. . . .

Dickens adds that to call Fagin a Jew is no worse than calling somebody else a Chinese. Mrs Davis replied, warmly if not persuasively, that “the Jewish race and religion are inseparable”; and a year later Dickens made amends by creating Riah, the kind, submissive old Jew of *Our Mutual Friend* (1864–5). Shortly before his death, in 1867–8, he revised *Oliver Twist* after thirty years, deleting numerous references to “the Jew” and replacing them with “Fagin” or “he.” Dickens lived and wrote as a radical Liberal, even if his views on particular issues were not always either radical or liberal.⁴ But in all this he did not stand alone.

Trollope, who once described himself as an “advanced conservative Liberal”, would have shared some of his assumptions on the question of race; and popular novelists like these are much more likely to establish a sense of ordinary opinion than scientists or pseudo-scientists like Knox or Galton. In *The Way We Live Now* (1875), for example, Miss Georgiana Longestaffe, who is nearing thirty and desperate to marry, betroths herself to a rich Jewish widower called Mr Brehgert,

a fat, greasy man, good-looking in a certain degree, about fifty, with hair dyed black, and beard and moustache dyed a dark purple colour. The charm of his face consisted in a pair of very bright black eyes, which were, however, set too near together in his face for the general delight of Christians. . . .

But the real trouble about him, for Georgiana’s old friend Lady Monogram, lay not so much in his physical characteristics as in his religion:

⁴ See William Oddie, “Dickens and the Indian Mutiny”, *Dickensian* 68 (1972); Harry Stone, “Dickens and the Jews”, *Victorian Studies* 2 (1959); George Ford, “The Governor Eyre Case in England”, *University of Toronto Quarterly* 17 (1948); and K. J. Fielding, “Edwin Drood and Governor Eyre”, *Listener* (25 December 1952). The problem was first exposed, and the Dickens–Davis correspondence first published, in Cumberland Clark, *Charles Dickens and his Jewish Characters* (London, 1918).

⁵ See Walter L. Arnstein, *The Bradlaugh Case* (1965), pp. 66, 198. The first Jew, religiously speaking, elected to the Commons was the Baron de Rothschild in 1847; but he waited for eleven years before a relief bill gave him the right to speak or vote.

The man was absolutely a Jew;—not a Jew that had been, as to whom there might possibly be a doubt whether he or his father or his grandfather had been the last Jew of the family; but a Jew that was.

And Lady Monogram counts up on her fingers the number of “decent people” who had recently married Jews or Jewesses, as one concerned only with what the world thought of such matters:

She was herself above all personal prejudices of that kind. Jew, Turk or infidel was nothing to her. She had seen enough of the world to be aware that her happiness did not lie in that direction, and could not depend in the least on the religion of her husband.

So religion counts socially for more, much more, than descent; and a conversion to Christianity, if only as a matter of form, sets most difficulties to rights. It was not what a Jew or a Chinese *is* that mainly concerned Dickens, or Trollope, or many of their readers—“is” as an irreversible fact of birth—but rather the cultural environment that forms them. Nurture is stronger than nature, in this view, and conversion an acceptable corrective. The admission of Jews to the House of Commons in 1858, when they were finally allowed to swear their own amended form of the oath, is another instance of this.⁵

The immigration policy of the State of Israel is yet another: it offers free entry to anyone of the Jewish religion, or whose mother was of that religion, or whose mother’s mother. The enthusiast for genetic theory, by contrast, such as a National Socialist, is unimpressed by religious adherence. A Jew in occupied Europe might in practice save himself by turning Christian or pretending to do so, but only to escape detection. In the last resort his religion was an irrelevance.

IT MIGHT BE CONSIDERED tempting, in view of this distinction, to speak of cultural racialism and genetic racialism. I shall try to resist this temptation. Since “racialism” is a 20th-century word, and has long since come to apply only to genetic theories concerning the superiority of one race over another, it would be merely precious to imagine now that it could refer to anything else. To call anyone a racist, now and in the predictable future, can only mean to attribute to him superior views about his own genetically hereditary characteristics. And there is always a lot to be said for using words as words are used.

On the other hand, this usage leaves two gaps in our descriptive instruments. The first matters little enough: but we now have no way, or at

least no brief way, of describing someone who thinks another race superior to his own. That state of mind is doubtless too rare in 20th-century polemics to cause much embarrassment; but the other gap is more serious. How are we to describe the view, common to many Victorians and still familiar, that *cultural* communities are subject to praise or blame? It is hard here not to coin a neologism: *culturalism*, perhaps, on the analogy of racialism. The word might be used to describe Dickens, Trollope, George Eliot, Matthew Arnold, T. S. Eliot, and many before or since—not to mention the State of Israel and some of the Arab states that surround it. And the word is at least neutral enough, by virtue of its novelty, to excite no passions and to denote an intellectual interest active in the literary consciousness of Europe at least since the Waverley novels.

IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT racist and culturalist ideas are easily compatible, and often co-exist. But a failure to distinguish them has deformed our understanding of the question and misinterpreted much of the evidence. Many historians have started from a preconception that racialism was a common, even a universal assumption among educated Victorians. This is simply untrue, if the word is to be understood as it is now understood. There is no clear evidence that Melbourne, Gladstone, John Stuart Mill or Balfour publicly held racist views—or privately either, so far as that assertion can mean anything. Many thought such views dangerous. Lord Acton, in private notes for his unwritten *History of Liberty*, named the theory of race as one of the four elements in “the increasing denial of liberty” that he sensed around him in the 1870s and after (the others were theories of Progress, Providence, and Perfectibility). When Salisbury, in a facetious address as Prime Minister in Edinburgh in 1888, indiscreetly referred to an Indian parliamentary

candidate as “a black man”—adding, amid more Tory laughter, that he imagined his colour was “not exactly black”—the Liberal Opposition mounted a public campaign for their candidate, and Gladstone demanded an apology.⁶ Indeed it would not be easy to think of any Victorian statesman, apart from Disraeli, who avowed racist views; and in Disraeli such views are more strongly an element of his fiction, notably in the *Coningsby* trilogy of 1844–5–7, than of his parliamentary utterances.

With men of letters, it is true, the list of racialists grows a little longer. But not much. Thomas Carlyle announced his contempt for the negro in his “Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question”, an article that appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* in December 1849 as a contribution to the abolition debate; J. S. Mill was to reply in strenuously anti-racist terms in the following month. T. H. Huxley, in an article on “Emancipation—Black and White” that appeared in 1865, at the end of the American Civil War, argued for the racial inferiority of the negro, since the white man is “bigger-brained and smaller-jawed”; but he thought all this an argument in favour of the emancipation of slaves, in his vigorously paradoxical way, since it meant that the masters had little or nothing to fear from competition. Dickens reacted emotionally to the Jamaica uprising of 1865 and its suppression, and on the side of Governor Eyre—though not in terms that make it altogether clear whether genetic considerations were paramount; and Carlyle joined in with him, sentimentally anti-sentimental as ever. Ruskin, a socialist, held that the upper classes were literally better bred than the lower, and in *Modern Painters* (Pt. ix, 1860) he urged a return of the concept of the gentleman to its “primal, literal and perpetual meaning” as “a man of pure race.” A few years later Francis Galton's *Hereditary Genius* (1869) appeared, a statistical study of the connections between ability and family descent, examining the heredity of statesmen, men of letters, painters, oarsmen and North Country wrestlers. Galton, a close student of his cousin Charles Darwin's law of natural selection, saw races as the sum of individuals and families, each one fitted for the conditions of its existence by a long Darwinian process; and he rejected Spartan methods of breeding as “alien and repulsive to modern feelings”, though he favoured social policies designed to delay the marriage of the weak and to accelerate that of the vigorous. But “eugenics”,

⁶ *Times* 1 December 1888; R. P. Masani, *Dadabhai Naoroji* (London, 1939), pp. 263 f. But Salisbury is not a serious candidate for racialism. In the following year he convened the Anti-Slave-Trade Conference in Brussels, and told a London audience in November 1889 how, under British insistence, both Zanzibar and Egypt had begun to resist slavery and slave-hunting. Years later, in a letter of 8 June 1900, he attacked the arrogance of the “damned nigger” elements in British society in Bombay as both “offensive and unworthy”, and constituting a “serious political danger”; J. A. S. Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy* (London 1964), p. 295.

a word Galton later invented, is largely neutral in this argument: it permits rather than requires racialism.

By the 20th century, outside the dreams of a few fanatics, it amounts to little more than a playful interest in the gossip of consanguinity. G. K. Chesterton, in his *Eugenics and Other Evils* (1922), ironically offered H. G. Wells a medal "as the Eugenist who destroyed Eugenics" in *Mankind in the Making* (1903) by confessing that scientists no longer claimed an ability to predict with confidence the talents of offspring. Interest was falling away. John Maynard Keynes, in "The Great Villiers Connection", conceded "a certain persistent element" in the talents of families, but the tone of his argument is amused. Eugenics had never laid much claim to conclusiveness, in its more distinguished exponents. By the early years of the 20th century it looked little better than a minor Victorian hobbyhorse.

CARLYLE, DISRAELI, HUXLEY, RUSKIN. . . This does not exhaust the list of possible racialists among Victorian men of letters, and a combing of popular and boys' fiction might produce significantly more. But when all is said, it still fails to produce the result that some historians nowadays take for granted, or as proven: that racialism was a common or universal sentiment in Victorian England. The literary and documentary evidence against that assertion is overwhelming.

⁷ *Nation* (28 April 1928), reviewing W. T. J. Gun, *Studies in Hereditary Ability*; reprinted in his *Essays in Biography*, edited by Geoffrey Keynes (London, 1951) p. 68. For more Cambridge Kingsman's gossip of a similar sort, laced with academic sociology, see Noël Annan, "The Intellectual Aristocracy", in *Studies in Social History: a Tribute to G. M. Trevelyan* (London, 1955).

⁸ Robert Payne, *The Unknown Karl Marx: Documents* (1972), pp. 14–15. David McLellan, in *Marx before Marxism* (London, 1970), denies that Marx's early essays give grounds for calling him anti-Jewish—though it was possible in the 19th century to be that without being a racialist. There seems to be no clear evidence, however, to support his assertion that "Judentum" for Marx had "very little religious, and still less racial, content" (p. 142). That defensive interpretation implies a clear divorce between Marx's use of language and that of other German polemicists of the age, and calls for more evidence than has yet been presented.

⁹ Marx, *The Eastern Question*, edited by Eleanor Marx and Edward Aveling (London, 1897) p. 600, from an article of January 1856.

THE CASE OF MARX is a tangled one. The essay to which most historians first turn to study his views of race, "On the Jewish Question", written several years before he settled in London, is not in the strictest sense an essay about a racial group. It first appeared in the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* in February 1844, and its title alone guarantees it a certain prominence in this debate. But its argument, which is abusively anti-Jewish, concerns the infiltration of "Judentum", or the spirit of Jewish commercialism, into Christendom, and the urgent need to extirpate it as a way of life. A culturalist argument, in short; and Marx appears to have gone on believing in it. It reappears in volume 1 of *Das Kapital* (1867), where Gentile capitalists are abused as "inwardly circumcised Jews" (ch. 4, 1), willingly absorbed into the usurious ethic of Judaism. All this has excited some natural indignation; but it is still unhelpful to confuse race with culture, or to suggest on the evidence of this essay (as one recent American biographer has done) that Marx's "solution of the Jewish question was not very different from Adolf Hitler's."⁸ True, Marx did believe in extermination, and often boasted of that belief. The class war that he promised is not a metaphor. "We are ruthless," he wrote defiantly in the last number of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in May 1849, addressing the governments of Germany,

and ask no quarter from you. When our turn comes, we shall not disguise our terrorism. . . .

But a proposal of racial (as opposed to social) extermination is not clearly present in the 1844 essay on the Jewish question. It does, however, exist.

MARX'S ATTACK on the Jews was essentially an attack on big finance—on a sect that had fattened itself on modern capitalism, converted much of Europe to its own money-grubbing ethos, and backed every despot that asked for money, including the Russian Tsar in his war in the Crimea.

Thus we find every tyrant backed by a Jew, as is every Pope by a Jesuit. In truth, the cravings of oppressors would be hopeless, and the practicability of war out of the question, if there were not an army of Jesuits to smother thought and a handful of Jews to ransack pockets.⁹

This exceeds anything in Engels, who thought anti-Semitism the sign of a backward civilisation; though he too was capable of using the word

"Jew" as a term of abuse. On the other hand, it is only doubtfully a racist assertion, since "Jew" in this passage of Marx's, and in many similar passages, refers only to members of a religion. But the famous letter to Engels of July 1862, attacking Lassalle as "niggerhaft" in his physical characteristics, "as the shape of his head and the growth of his hair indicates", can only be read as racist abuse. August Bebel and Edouard Bernstein, the first editors of the Marx-Engels correspondence, nervously deleted similar anti-Jewish references, and the Marxist faithful have sometimes felt moved to deny the authenticity of this letter, though it now appears in the official East Berlin edition of the works of Marx and Engels (vol 30, 1964, p. 259). Moreover, no earlier use of "niggerhaft" in German has yet been found,¹⁰ so that Marx may be tentatively credited with the invention, or rather the adaptation from Anglo-American, of a key term of racial abuse in the German language.

It is sometimes suggested that this letter is merely a momentary expression of personal exasperation. But Marx and Engels, years before 1862, had already publicly supported a programme of what can only be taken as racial extermination. In two articles probably written by Engels, and published by Marx in his *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in January-February 1849, a programme had been announced for the Slavs of eastern Europe. In these articles on Hungary and Panslavism, and on Democratic Panslavism, the struggle of the smaller Slav peoples against Habsburgian domination is represented as a reactionary movement against the more advanced forces of Europe to help the reactionary power of the Tsars. The argument here is openly ethnic; and only German, Poles and Magyars are given

any credit as "the bearers of progress." The rest must go.

The chief mission of all other races and peoples—large and small—is to perish in the revolutionary holocaust. Therefore they are counter-revolutionary.¹¹

This is because the Slavs, being backward, have failed to pursue the essential historical evolution of developing a bourgeoisie. All European countries contain "left-overs of earlier inhabitants", now rightly brought into subjection by more advanced peoples:

This ethnic trash always becomes and remains until its complete extermination or loss of national status (*Vertilgung oder Entnationalisierung*), the most fanatic bearer of counter-revolution, because its entire existence is nothing more than a protest against a great historical revolution.

Engels instances Scottish Jacobites, Bretons, Basques and South Slavs, "waste products" and "ethnic trash" (*Völkerabfall*), whose aspirations could only bring Russian power deep into Europe. And the article concludes:

The next world war will cause not only reactionary classes and dynasties but also entire reactionary peoples to disappear from the earth. And that too is progress.

A VISION OF HISTORICAL PROGRESS linked to racial purification was not a brief interest of the Victorian socialists. As Marx and Engels aged, and as the prospect of instant revolution in the industrial states receded, their studies grew increasingly anthropological and prehistorical. Social Darwinism and an interest in eugenics had joined to suggest that progress was interpretable in racial terms.

Marx's late notes on this subject, scribbled in his last, sad years of failure and illness in 1879–82 (and used by Engels, after Marx's death in 1883, for his own researches into the history of family institutions), have only recently been made public, edited from the manuscripts in an Amsterdam library.¹² The macaronic jottings of an ageing revolutionary, copying and commenting in German and English on the writings of such recent anthropologists as Lewis Morgan and Sir Henry Maine, do not make inviting reading, and few will be found to peruse them through. But they help to establish that socialist and racist convictions in that age were complementary. Marx and Engels were not socialists who also happened to be racists, or racists who also happened to be socialists. They openly

¹⁰ I am indebted to Mr Trevor Jones, editor of *Harrap's Standard German and English Dictionary*, for this detail. Marx had already used the noun "nigger" in quotation five years before, indignantly, in an article in the *New York Daily Tribune* of 16 September 1857 on the Indian Mutiny; see Marx and Engels, *The First Indian War of Independence* (Moscow, 1960) p. 93. The English word is recorded by *OED* as early as 1786.

¹¹ First collected in *Aus dem literarischen Nachlass von Marx, Engels und Lassalle*, edited by Franz Mehring (Stuttgart, 1902), III, pp. 236 f., and translated in *The Russian Menace to Europe: a Collection of Articles, Speeches, Letters and New Dispatches*, edited by P. W. Blackstock and Bert F. Hoselitz (1953), pp. 61 f.

¹² *The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx*, edited by Lawrence Krader (Assen, 1972), published by the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.

believed that the one conviction requires the other. The connection has since been lost sight of, even deliberately obscured, and it needs to be explained.

Soon after the appearance of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, a book Marx seems to have read at once, he wrote to Ferdinand Lassalle that the book provided the outline of an anthropological explanation of modern industrial societies, "the scientific foundation of the historical class-war."¹³ The triumphant classes, which are the bearers of Progress and emerge with the Industrial Revolution, are first the dominant bourgeoisie, and soon after a revolutionary proletariat. Marxian revolution is seen as the final stage of an accelerating historical process to be measured by thousands of years. In the heat of immediate revolutionary hopes, in the 1840s and 1850s, it was the final stage that naturally absorbed interest and energy; in Marx's last years, in the face of a realisation that revolution could not come in his own lifetime, the time-scale widened backwards as well as forwards.

The evolution of human history was seen in vaster terms, with variations representing inferior stocks, suppressed, or still to be suppressed, by a process Darwinianly selective.¹⁴ And the eventual triumph of Communism, however delayed, would represent a return on a higher plane to the communism of property that had once prevailed in primitive families. Private property had only arisen at all under the pressure of procuring subsistence; it remained small among savages, but grew suddenly vast under modern industrial conditions, with the result that the new industrial classes must inevitably go to war with one other over the power that it promised to confer. No detail is too small or too tedious for Marx's interest, in these last years, in problems of kinship, tribal marriage customs, or property rights among Red Indians, Australian aborigines, ancient Romans and modern Indians. But a connection between race and *Volk* emerges, and Henry Maine is abused as a "blockheaded Englishman" because he begins his analysis not with the *gens* but with its patriarch or chief, fails to notice that in primitive societies property was tribal or communal, not personal, and that the evolution of products into commodities

arose not from members of the same tribe but out of exchanges between tribes—a detail later incorporated by Engels into the 1894 edition of *Das Kapital*.¹⁵ If the difference between one people and another is seen, in prehistory at least, as a source of evolutionary progress, then the early articles on Pan Slavism and their condemnation of historical "left-overs" like Highlanders, Bretons, and Basques can be seen as completing this racial analysis in a contemporary context. Equality may be pursued—may have to be pursued—by killing those who are genetically unequal.

Even in modern industrial societies, history has left socialists a variety of little mopping-up tasks to perform. An ancient process of natural selection will have to be completed by a proletarian dictatorship, once it has seized power through revolutionary terror.

SOCCIALIST RACIALISM, then, is already present in published records in the nineteenth century; but it grows much clearer in its outline when related to materials only recently published or collected for the first time. Set these materials beside the writings of native-born Victorian socialists such as John Ruskin, Beatrice Webb, and H. G. Wells, and certain long-standing puzzles about their attitudes to Jews and other races may be soluble.

It has sometimes been supposed, for instance, that slighting remarks in their writings against other communities are merely cultural in their emphasis; or merely instances of what many Victorian intellectuals accepted regardless of their politics. Neither explanation will now do. Beatrice Webb's concern for the sweat-shops of East London in the 1880s, many of them run by Polish-Jewish immigrants, could be mistaken for resentment against immigrants rather than hatred of a racial type. But a remark in her autobiography *My Apprenticeship* (1926) makes this less likely. Believing herself to be of remotely Jewish origin, she conceived of having noticed in East End Jews a quality which she might herself have inherited genetically:

It was the "overcoming by yielding" type of will, inherited from my father, which, when I was living amid the Jews in East London, I thought I recognised as a racial characteristic. (p. 61).

In an article in the *New Statesman* (30 August 1913) she and her husband Sidney Webb had already warned against a future cataclysm that might

¹³ Marx-Engels, *Werke* (East Berlin, 1964), vol. XXX, p. 578, in a letter of January 1861.

¹⁴ *Das Kapital* (ed. 1914), vol. I, p. 306.

¹⁵ *Ethnological Notebooks*, pp. 115, 127, 292, 74–5 (from Krader's introduction).

destroy the civilisation of “the Western European races” in favour of “the negro, the Kaffir, or the Chinese”—a possibility the Webbs viewed as a “melancholy conclusion.”

H. M. Hyndman, the founder of the Social Democratic Federation, called the South African War “the Jews’ war” and “worse than the Dreyfus case”—“an abominable war on behalf of German-Jew mine-owners and other international interlopers.”¹⁶

H. G. Wells, in *Anticipations* (1902), made a case for socialist extermination in the cause of racial fitness in the bluntest terms. Those “swarms of black, and brown, and dirty-white, and yellow people, who do not come into the new needs of efficiency” will simply have to go:

The world is a world, not a charitable institution, and I take it they will have to go. The whole tenor and meaning of the world, as I see it, is that they will have to go. . . . (p. 317)

The euphemism he employs is “to die out and disappear.” But in the same book, outlining his programme for a future socialist utopia, he recommends the scientific killing of incurables, alcoholics, and persons with transmissible diseases, all of whom will have to be “removed from being.” This is a view highly compatible with *Das Kapital*, and still more compatible with the totality of Marx’s views recently unearthed by modern scholarship; but the problem of H. G. Wells’s sources remains obscure. Unlike Hyndman, Wells did not regard himself as a Marxist, though he was later to support with enthusiasm Lenin’s seizure of power in October 1917; he drew rather on a wide variety of scientific-progressive views, absorbed over a period of years into a highly individual philosophy. On the other hand, his version of racialism is strikingly like Marx’s and Engels’s in its contempt for the left-overs of history. Even as late as *The Science of Life* (1929–30), where he rejected talk about racial purity as nonsense, he was to dismiss “certain very isolated peoples” in Africa, Australia and Brazil as “divergent or retrograde forms of human life”—backward, conservative and fated to disappear one way or another (IX.i.3). The prospect for planned genetic

progress, by then, had waned, and *Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind* (1931) offers no easy hope. Scientists do not know enough, he had come to believe—or at least not yet.

In the following year the left-wing scientist J. B. S. Haldane collected his articles under the title *The Inequality of Man* to enforce a similarly sceptical view. Breeding programmes for a scientific state, he had come to believe, were still far in the future:

The only clear task of eugenics is to prevent the inevitably inefficient one per cent of the population from being born, and to encourage the breeding of persons of exceptional ability where that ability is known to be hereditary. We cannot as yet go much further than this. . . .

Months later, the National Socialists took power in Germany, and went much further indeed. But intellectual socialists in the West had already, by then, lost most of their racialist certainties; and by a supreme irony of history they were forced to watch, powerlessly and from the sidelines, a drama for which they had written much of the score, to be performed by men whom they despised working in a cause they could not fathom.

THE STORY OF SOCIALIST RACIALISM, then, among intellectuals born in the reign of Victoria, ended in scientific doubt and political embarrassment. And that embarrassment helps to explain how thorough an attempt was later to be made to brand racialism as a fascist perversion. On an historical view, all that is much too simple. Only some fascist states have been racialist, after all; and not all socialist states, then or now, have escaped racialism or sought to escape it. The obsessions of the Victorian socialists survive in Stalin’s policies towards minorities, and among some of his successors. And even, from time to time and as the profoundest imaginable embarrassment, in the protestations of some Marxist sects in the present age. In December 1972, for example, Ulrike Meinhof of the West German “Red Army Fraction” appeared before a judicial hearing and spoke up publicly in the Good Old Cause of revolutionary extermination. “How was Auschwitz possible, what was anti-Semitism?” she asked from the dock. According to a newspaper account:¹⁷

People should have explained all that, instead of accepting Auschwitz collectively as an expression of evil. The worst of it is that we were all agreed about it, Communists included. But now she [Meinhof] had recognised that anti-Semitism was essentially

¹⁶ C. Tsuzuki, *H. M. Hyndman and British Socialism* (Oxford, 1961) pp. 126 f. On the anti-Semitism of late 19th-century German Marxists such as August Bebel, see Robert S. Wistrich, “Karl Marx, German Socialists and the Jewish Question, 1880–1914”, *Soviet Jewish Affairs* 3 (1973).

¹⁷ *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (15 December 1972).

anti-capitalist. It absorbed the hatred of men for their dependence on money as a means of exchange, and their longing for communism. . . .

How much was socialism, and how much national-socialism in her passionate self-defence?

Auschwitz meant that six million Jews were killed, and thrown on to the waste-heap of Europe, for what they were: money-Jews (*Geldjuden*). Finance-capital and banks, the hard core of the system of imperialism and capitalism, had turned the hatred of men against money and exploitation, and against the Jews. The failure of the Left, of the Communists, had lain in not making these connections plain. . . .

And so Marxism and racialism could be proposed once more as philosophical comrades, in our

own times, and the link yet again made plain:

Germans were anti-Semitic, and that is why they nowadays support the Red Army Fraction. They have not yet recognised all this, because they have not yet been absolved of fascism and the murder of the Jews. And they have not yet been told that anti-Semitism is really a hatred of capitalism.

They had been told it in the 19th century, however: they had been told it by Marx and Engels. And all Europe was to be told it, by English socialists as well as German, before 1914. If Europe has since contrived to forget it, it may yet contrive to remember. The reminder is historically just to the dead, and salutary to the living.

The Importance of Liturgy

You never notice these streets
you're running through on some tag-
game or away from Indians
or just going somewhere

you never see any of them

but in one of them he said
"I always put a holly wreath on
my father's grave at Christmas"
and that was a different street:
walking beside him and trying to
remember always to put a wreath
on your father's grave at Christmas

that street was his father
jumping off his head into the Thames
and my own cracking his eggshell skull
dead and we were together there

at the end of it I felt ashamed
at not knowing where my father was
but we found a stone with a metal cup
under some old flowers and we put
clean water in it and new leaves

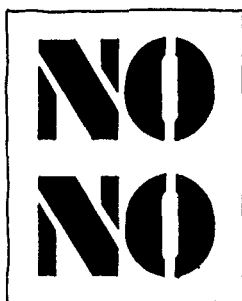
it felt like a street we would follow
together every year, and I looked at
the houses to remember where we'd come from

but that street was no different
from the others: the houses were clean,
the light changed and, by this time,
I don't even know if I've been there.

Edwin Brock

George Kennan's Illusions

A Reply



GEORGE KENNAN makes the disturbing assertion that the United States has so patently failed to solve its internal problems in the past 20–30 years that it has nothing to offer the world by way of example. It is, he argues (*ENCOUNTER*, September), particularly grotesque

for the United States to spend so much of its energy on opposing a much weakened Soviet Russia

“in order to save a West which is honeycombed with bewilderment and a profound sense of internal decay. . . . Show me first an America which has successfully coped with the problems of crime, drugs, deteriorating educational standards, urban decay, pornography, and decadence of one sort or another—show me an America that has pulled itself together and is what it ought to be, then I will tell you how we are going to defend ourselves from the Russians.”

The attitude Kennan represents suffers from a utopian fallacy. People have, of course, always had utopian aspirations; but these were, in the past, for the most part confined to literature. In our own times, something entirely new has happened: it has become an obsession to compare the state of existing societies with some imaginary perfection, and to draw practical conclusions from the gap between what is and what could be.

Previous effective cultures did not ask themselves this sort of question. They did not believe that perfection was attainable by mortal beings; and where they did ask this question, they had religious answers to it—either to the effect that these problems were for the next life, for God and not for man, or else (as in the case of Buddhism) that perfection lay in a substanceless, perpetual motion in which everyone could, as an individual, become his own Buddha. But to set up a model of perfection on earth, and then to say: “We don’t conform to this pattern”, is a disease of modern

times; and it is one which has become very widespread through the media, which Kennan rightly criticises.

Take the history of the American republic. It has its horrors, its crimes, and its glories, and often they are tied up together. Or take the American Civil War; in some ways it was glorious, in some ways it was odious. The Black problem, the problem of slavery, has been with America since the beginning. Who could solve it? One might say there should never have been a slave trade. True, there never *should* have been; but there was, historically, and its consequences are still alive. Tremendous efforts have been made, both by whites and blacks, to better the black man’s lot; great successes have been achieved. Yet each success creates its own frustrations.

Crime—yes, there does seem to be more crime; and there is a drug disease in modern society; and I would not disagree with Kennan that these things must be fought and eliminated. But to say that, because all this exists, a society does not deserve to be defended, seems to me grotesque. This is not how nations, societies, and cultures have operated in the past. They worked; they defended themselves; they produced good and bad rulers, reformers and people resistant to reform; they grew and struggled and declined. And when they finally collapsed, it was because there was a combination of pressures from outside, and a loss of self-confidence by the educated class itself. This seems to me to be the disease that is present today particularly in Britain (it is, under the surface, just as bad in France) and widespread in the United States. While denouncing this phenomenon, Kennan seems, in a sense, to be exemplifying it. Surely states do not exist for the purpose of bringing about perfection on earth.

Kennan is right in saying that the American polity and American history are peculiar to the circumstances in which the United States was born, and can never be repeated. But all that means is that America is a very peculiar polity and society which has some defects that the

rest of us don't have, and some great virtues. Take it as it is; it has warts and it has beauty. It has strengths and weaknesses. It does stupid things at times; many of its spokesmen are third-rate people, but politicians of all states include many mediocrities. Some of them say ridiculous things; some do nasty things. But why, for that reason, should one be ridden with guilt and cry: "What has America to offer to the world? . . . What utopian panacea can it provide? . . ." And if it cannot provide them—is it guilty? This seems to me an unhistorical way of looking at history.

DID THE UNITED STATES ever claim that the American experience had universal validity? Did the American model become, at the height of American power, an American socio-cultural imperialism? There arose in the late 19th century, in the European environment of expanding industrialisation, a new social élite in all major countries, with a certain, brash self-confidence—a belief that they knew how to run the world; and the Americans were only one example. But in those days the validity of one's "model" was not felt to impose on one the duty of imposing the model on other peoples.

The French may have believed that the French language and culture were the only ones that could really be called a civilisation, but (with the only partial exception of Napoleon) Frenchmen did not attempt to foist it on others. The idea of spreading one's culture around the world was more characteristic of the last part of the 19th century when Germany, and Russia too, began to feel that they had "models" to offer to the rest of mankind.

All this is disappearing now because the heirs to 19th-century European imperialism are riddled with guilt-complexes. It has survived only in one place—the Soviet Union. The paradox is that, although, of all the 19th-century imperialist élites, the one that was weakest was precisely the Russian élite—and although this élite was destroyed as such in the Revolution (though individual members of it of course survived)—yet now, nearly sixty years after the Bolshevik Revolution, a new Russian élite has been found; and not only is it full of imperial arrogance, but there is a quite specific continuity of style between its imperial arrogance and the old. The truth is that the recruitment of a new élite to run Stalin's industrialisation programmes produced a caste of formidable, self-righteous, expansive caricatures of the brash 19th-century Western imperialist—of a Theodore Roosevelt and a Joseph Chamberlain.

American supremacy in the world in the 1940s and 1950s did not have this socio-cultural

characteristic. The Americans saw what was happening in the territories that the Soviet Union was occupying, and they reacted to what they saw. Up to the Communist takeover of Eastern and Central Europe there had been a tremendous enthusiasm for the Russians as allies and for the Soviet Union as a new social order. The Russians were fighting bravely against Hitler, and they had something splendid to offer. Roosevelt felt this, and so did millions of Americans. Then they saw that once the Russians were on top, they began brutally to oppress the European peoples whom they had conquered. There grew up a feeling that this had to be stopped, and the way to stop it was to give the old and still strong European nations the opportunity to defend themselves. The Marshall Plan was set in train, and the tables were turned. But to say that the Marshall Plan expressed a missionary zeal to "Americanise Europe"—or that it was a piece of "American imperialism"—is complete nonsense. There was none of that arrogant moralising to shape the world in one's image that is characteristic of Soviet expansionism. But there *was* a belief that it was the Americans' duty to stand up for liberty. That kind of idealism was certainly behind the Marshall Plan and the founding of NATO. It does not seem to me at all a discreditable motivation.

KENNAN INSISTS that, before we can effectively defend ourselves against the Soviet Union, we have to learn how to defend ourselves from our own sinfulness.

Nothing can defend a society from itself if its upper 100,000 men and women, both the decision-makers and those who help to mould the thinking of the decision-makers, are resolved to capitulate. Perhaps there was something of that in the collapse of the Roman Empire and the rise on its ruins of the barbarian kingdoms. Sitting back comfortably in the year 1976, we can say: "Well, the Roman Empire itself wasn't all that worthy of respect. It collapsed in the 5th century, but by about 1100 A.D. a combination of Barbarian, Roman and Christian inheritance had created a splendid mediaeval civilisation. . . ." It is rather easy to talk like that; but 700 years is a very long time, and to wish on our descendants for generations on end a barbarism no less brutal than, although different from, that of the Frankish barbarians, seems to me a criminally frivolous attitude to take.

But, clearly, it *could* happen. It could be that this failure of nerve and the abdication of the Western social élite *will* lead to the disintegration of the West; and this could bring with it the rise of new men acting as pawns for the barbarians. They would, of course, be purged and shot very

quickly; but in the meantime they would have carved out rewarding careers for themselves on the ruins of the civilisation they helped to destroy.

Here, again, one could argue that a lot would survive. But this is so obvious as to be hardly worth saying, and it offers very little comfort. Something always survives. Take the Soviet Union. I must confess that, as an historian pre-occupied with the past, there aren't many things in the history of Russian culture and tradition that are very admirable; but one can name certain specific features that have survived even under the Soviet régime. The notion of "Holy Russia" is still very strong today in spite of all that the Bolsheviks did to destroy it. Equally, if our own societies were to succumb to any new barbarism, not necessarily a Communist barbarism, no doubt a lot would survive (unless, of course, the human race blew itself up). But the fact that something would survive is no reason for sitting back and remaining indifferent to the tragedy of decline and fall.

BUT WHAT EXACTLY lies behind all this? Are we being faced with a perversion of the doctrines of the 18th-century Enlightenment? This is a tricky problem. The vulgarisation and distortion by the mass media of the values of the Enlightenment—the cult of hedonism, for instance—are easy enough to pinpoint and to reject. But this renaissance of the Enlightenment has also spread ideas and values that appear at first sight to be highly worth while, yet on closer examination turn out to be nonsensical and objectionable. Take this incredible doctrine—I can grasp it intellectually, but in no other way—that a government should seek its allies in its foreign policy according to a scale of virtue. You look round the world and say: "Costa Rica (or whatever) has an admirable democratic government, therefore Costa Rica must be our ally No. 1." This is simply not how governments work.

(1) Think of our alliance with Soviet Russia in World War II. Admittedly, there was a lot of moralisation about it; admittedly, we all wanted to believe—and I, as a young and obscure citizen at that time, was just as guilty as anybody else—that our Soviet allies represented a new régime of justice and humane order. Certain critical spirits in responsible positions knew better. Nevertheless they said, quite rightly in my opinion: "We must cooperate 100% with the Soviet Union because the Russians are fighting our common enemy. . . ."

(2) Now take a look at the South Atlantic. There are two potentially important powers there: Brazil and South Africa. Brazil is an unpleasant, oppressive dictatorship, though eco-

nomically rather successful. South Africa, though not perhaps strictly speaking a dictatorship, is a régime based on a loathsome doctrine of racial superiority. Should we proclaim that these countries can never be our allies because we disapprove of the way in which they run their domestic affairs? Should we allow Soviet influence to intrude into the South Atlantic because we find the Brazilian and South African régimes to be lacking in virtue? Or should we think in terms of which power is going to do more, or less, damage to our interests?

(3) Or consider the merits of our choice to cooperate with Soviet Russia or Mao's China. Do we decide to draw closer to the Russians because the Chinese system of Communism is more repulsive to us than the Soviet variety? Or do we say to ourselves: "Chinese interests don't clash with ours—in fact, the two coincide, whereas Soviet interests are in conflict with ours—therefore we will cooperate with China. . . ." Alliances are, and always have been, determined by *interests*. The notion that they are determined by what constitutes virtue according to some moral League-Table is new and so revolutionary in its implications that it must have disastrous results. (This League-Table heresy is more widespread in Britain—although Britain has a long tradition of realistic foreign policy—than it is in America.)

WHAT ACCOUNTS for all this? Perhaps the contemporary rejection of the concept of personal sin and the transfer of the notion of individual responsibility to a collective scapegoat: the White Race, Imperialism, whatever. This transfer is a characteristic of the last 50 years, and is a disaster. Wars and conflicts are deplorable occurrences in which good men and bad, and men who are part-good and part-bad, fight on each side. To equate one of the parties with virtue is absurd. Of course, it was sometimes done in the past, as in the struggles between great religious armies. But the results have always been catastrophic and one would have thought the practice expired with the Treaty of Westphalia. It did not.

Yet, it may be objected, are we not in fact engaged in a religious type of conflict with the Soviet Union? It is certainly that on the Soviet side. My arguments against Soviet power do undoubtedly contain an element of ideological militancy, for I regard the Soviet Union as an odious system. There is, also, a link between the odiousness of the system and rational interest in the sense that tyrannical régimes are bound to keep hatred, disaffection, and therefore potential conflict going indefinitely.

There are two things here to be considered. One is the tyranny of the Soviet Russian régime over the Russian people, and the other its tyranny

over other nations. On the first, it is difficult not to go along with Solzhenitsyn's argument that the Soviet régime is a very unnatural form of government which is bound to do grievous harm, not only to the Russian people but to the whole world. However this may be, we are on surer ground when we move a step further and think not only of the Soviet Russian rule over other Russians, but of Soviet Russian rule over Ukrainians, Uzbeks, and other subject peoples who were incorporated in the Soviet Empire against their will. Still more do I feel concern when it comes to the rule of Soviet Russians over European nations, such as the Poles, Hungarians, Czechs and Rumanians; for the Soviet domination of these is not limited to the supremacy of one power over another (a phenomenon we have always had in history); it amounts to an attempt (advanced with a changing mixture of brutality and caution) to deprive these nations of their whole historical and cultural identity. For example, when a Polish historian happens to write about the policy of the Empress Catherine II in partitioning Poland, and calls a spade a spade, the Soviet Embassy in Warsaw makes an official protest to the Polish government.

This re-writing of a great European nation's history—this attempted perversion of its national identity, this whole manner of behaviour towards old European peoples as though they were subject-nations, this insane policy of national humiliation, this vicious form of imperialism which the Soviet leaders practise *vis-à-vis* all non-Russian peoples—is something that threatens our security and our existence, and must be resisted.

Clearly, I don't deny having moral preferences. Still, I feel that the League-Table mentality is wholly wrong. To think that, because the Soviet leaders are my enemies, they are automatically wicked men—or that my compatriots, or the Americans, in so far as they are against Soviet domination, are all virtuous—is pernicious nonsense.

THE "MCCARTHY ERA" in the United States did immense harm, not because Senator Joe McCarthy introduced "terror" in the United States—he may have tried, but he was not very successful—but because McCarthy created the view that, because Communism was wicked, all Russians were wicked, bestial people, too. Some years later, when Americans were again able to visit Russia and met Russians, they found to their surprise that the Russians weren't "bestial" at all but decent, often lovable, human beings, like anyone else. And because they made this discovery, they therefore immediately concluded that everything they had been told about

America's conflict of interest with Russia, about Soviet ideological hostility and expansionism, must also be mistaken. McCarthy, by his perversity, had thus discredited things which were, in fact, true. What I am saying is that one's enemies can be enemies and yet normal creatures. One can even respect people although they are enemies and will remain enemies. It seems terribly difficult for the modern mass-democrat to understand this.

IS THERE, AS KENNAN ASSERTS, a special affinity between Russians and Americans? I doubt it very much. If one thinks of the considerable number of Frenchmen, Germans and British who have understood the Russians and written penetrating books about them, they compare quite favourably with Americans.

What is perhaps common to traditional Russia—and, *a fortiori*, to Soviet Russia—and the United States, is a certain anti-élitism. This amounts to a shared flair for having friendly, face-to-face, unpretentious relationships on the basis of complete equality. Americans and Russians do, at this level, have a consensus; they feel that they can sit down and talk to each other in good fellowship, without any snobbery, in a way that Europeans can't. But if Kennan approves of this, as he does, then he is inconsistent with his plea for the re-creation of an American intellectual aristocracy as a precondition of curing America's present weakness.

There is a feature in Kennan's thinking that makes me feel that his cultural view of the world is a bit one-sided. He knows, of course, the United States; he knows Russia very well; he is a very perceptive observer of German affairs; and he knows his Scandinavia. Also he has great understanding and sympathy for Britain. In other words, he is deeply versed in the history and culture of all the Northern peoples in both hemispheres; but the nations whose culture derives from the Mediterranean appear not to interest him.

Obviously Kennan, as a highly educated and cultured man, knows about the Mediterranean world, but the wisdom and art and literature of classical antiquity and, more broadly, of the whole Mediterranean area, do not seem to be significant in his culture. He is a sort of Northerner of the world; and if you are thinking in those terms, then you probably give more importance to a continuity he seems to perceive from the North German plain, through Russia, all the way to the Pacific, across North America and back to Europe again, than you would to any South-North cultural relationship.

But who are these Russians with whom Kennan

has a special affinity? Are they, basically, the same sort of "Northern men" as the Germans, the Scandinavians, the original British and Americans, who happen to speak not a Germanic language but a Slav tongue? It is quite arguable that they aren't that at all, that they are derived from a mixture of all the peoples who invaded the forest and steppes for centuries on end.

Take the River Volga, the "Russian River"—it is not Russian at all. It is a Turkic River, its Tatar name was Idel; the population of most of the Volga Valley until late in the 19th century were Turko-Tatar peoples who have been living in the steppelands of Russia right up to the limit of the forest and even into the forest. Another important component of the Russian nation is Finnish, for a whole variety of Finnish tribes went to build up the Russian nation.

ONE MIGHT DEFEND Kennan's point that there is a shared anti-élitism in both Russia and America from a quite different angle. It is possible to argue that both Russians and Americans are highly distrustful of government. They both tend to say that politics and government are loathsome, and that only personal relations and family lives really matter. On that level, Russians and Americans no doubt get on very well.

But as soon as one has said that, one has to think how utterly different the politics is which they *reject*. The politics the Russians repudiate is this endless despotism, Russia's traditional despotism, developed to an unparalleled pitch of perfection by the Bolshevik régime. The politics and government which Americans reject could not be more different. They, and especially intellectual Americans, repudiate politics because the corruption and cheap demagoguery of the party system, and the vulgarity and ruthlessness of the party bosses, offend them. The deification of material success antagonises intellectuals who deal with non-material values. They feel that to be involved in the demagogic process is undignified and disagreeable. In other words, the reason for the rejection of politics by the kind of American we are talking about is *élitism*, whereas the reason for the rejection of politics by Russians is *fear*. The motivation is utterly different, even if the results may be similar. Frenchmen, Englishmen, and Germans are less averse to politics (although, of course, indifference in the man-in-the-pub is a fairly widespread phenomenon among many nations). It may perhaps be true that Americans and Russians reject politics in a more conscious and more systematic fashion than other nations do.



MR GEORGE KENNAN is always worth listening to even when he is wrong, and since he is a complex man he is seldom so wholly wrong as not to be worth arguing with. He had his period of greatest influence after the Second World War, when the alliance with the Soviet Union was giving way to the Cold War. Although he was not the sole author of the policy of containing Soviet expansionism, which thereafter dominated American foreign policy, he was, with his rare knowledge of the Soviet Union and persuasive pen, a central figure in formulating and explaining it. Afterwards he came to dislike some features of the over-enthusiastic creature he had helped to create, and when later he espoused the cause of mutual disengagement from Central Europe his advice was rejected.

Now, having published his rather melancholy memoirs, he is to be found in even more melancholy conversation with Mr George Urban in the September issue of *ENCOUNTER*. So sad is he about the state of western civilization that all the effort put into his postwar policies must seem wasted. The

emphasis has been put on the wrong things, he says, on military confrontation with the Russians instead of on averting ecological and demographic disaster. He advocates the gradual and qualified withdrawal of America from far-flung commitments because: "we have nothing to teach the world. We have to confess that we have not got the answers to the problems of human society in the modern age."

ALL THIS SEEMS a far cry from his advocacy after the war of "a policy of firm containment, designed to confront the Russians with an unalterable counterforce at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world." It seems to leave the West with very little valid response to Soviet policy which he described in those days, in terms which many would regard as still appropriate today, as:

"a fluid stream which moves constantly, wherever it is permitted to move, toward a given goal. Its main concern is to make sure that it has filled every nook and cranny available to it in the basin of world power."

He explains the apparent change by saying that he felt it necessary to stiffen the western stance in order to persuade the Russians to negotiate withdrawal from central Europe, "for the Soviet presence there seemed to me catastrophic for the present and future of the entire continent." He then found that he had been almost too successful in that "our people had

"Still Worth

Yet how much is there in the idea that a shared characteristic (in Kennan's reading of the Russian and American psyche) is a certain moral seriousness? It would be best expressed, as Kennan sees it, in the 19th-century Russian novel and the Puritanical preoccupations of the Midwest.

Here Kennan is, again, on shaky ground. What could exhibit more "moral seriousness" than French Catholic thought, not to mention French lay literature? There is a whole tradition in France, from the Middle Ages onwards, of rigorous moral philosophy. And what about the "moral seriousness" of German thought and literature, especially in the 18th and 19th centuries? What Kennan probably has in mind is a certain shared predilection for *introspection*. There is, if one is to make a broad generalisation, a good deal of brooding and even morbid self-criticism in the two cultures, and it can be sublime when filtered through the genius of a Dostoevsky, but surely farcical in the obsessions

¹ In the Catholic countries I know one used not to get any of this. But recently, the Catholic Church, too, has begun to go in for spectacular breast-beating. One has the impression that the Catholic Church is like one of those tribes in the South Sea islands, which were, for centuries, impervious to illness, but then some Europeans came along carrying the common cold, and the whole population died out.

of some self-righteous Congressional Committee.

The origins of Kennan's American self-questioning are worth thinking about. There seems to me something rather special about the East Coast guilt-complex. Two kinds of guilt-obsession have come together here: a Presbyterian kind of Scottish-Puritan tradition, and Jewish self-doubt. In a city like New York, where a very high proportion of the intellectual élite are of Presbyterian or Jewish origin, the guilt-obsession is maximised. The same goes for some of the other cultural centres of the United States; and there is a similar phenomenon, although on a smaller scale, in London.¹

WHAT I FIND MOST PUZZLING in Kennan's argument is his warning: don't even contemplate the end of the Soviet régime, for we have nothing better to put in its place. . . . There are two questions here. If and when there are signs of groups of people trying to break free from the Soviet régime, or indeed trying to overthrow it on part, or, in the last resort, all of its territory—should we or should we not aid these people, either by not doing anything that would make it more difficult for them to break away from Soviet rule, or by positively helping them in any

Sticking Up For"

become so persuaded of the hostility of the Soviet leaders that they would now wholly dismiss the idea of ever dealing with them about anything." This fits in with his early justification of containment as a way of forcing the Soviet Union to come to terms with the limits of its power.

HIS REMARKS (to which these brief extracts can scarcely do justice) illuminate one unusual man's pilgrimage through the hopes and disappointments of postwar politics. He is right to stress the limits on both American and Soviet power, the importance of other issues facing mankind, the dangers in relying too much on military power for the defence of democracy, and the absence of any really coherent western policy towards eastern Europe, where Soviet hegemony is both a tragedy and a potential danger to peace, since it is not accepted by the people of the area. He is also right to stress that *détente*, like containment before it, has been oversold in the United States. There is, he says, "only a narrow area in which profitable collaboration is possible between ourselves and the Soviet Government" though it is broader now than it was, and he does not want to go back to the Cold War.

He must, however, be challenged on a number of points. His pessimism is too facile, too fashionable and perhaps already out of date. Nobody can be sure at the moment whether western democracies are on the way up or down but they are changing in ways

that are at least as likely to bring renewal as collapse, particularly in the United States. It is right, of course, to be more modest than before about the prospect of exporting liberal democracy of the western type to all parts of the globe, but to abandon almost all belief in the universality of some of the values which the United States tries, albeit imperfectly, to uphold is to throw in the sponge at a peculiarly inappropriate moment.

SECONDLY, even the most acute awareness of our internal defects is not a reason for being too casual about external defence against a system with infinitely worse defects. It is certainly true, as Mr Kennan suggests, that there are many obstacles to Soviet expansionism other than western arms. They include not only the Soviet Union's internal troubles but also local nationalism, rival forms of communism, and the difficulty which the Soviet Union has in exerting its influence over different cultures. But the balance of military power remains one of the essential foundations of peace. Mr Kennan briefly acknowledges the need for stronger conventional troops, but otherwise seems rather more sceptical than is necessary about the continuing validity of his own doctrine of containment.

Leading article in
The Times (London)

way we can? The second question arises from Kennan's doubt whether there are in Russia people capable of providing a better régime than the despotism they have now.

On the first point: I don't deny that it is possible to have a worse régime than Soviet rule—after all, there is no end to human perversity—but it is not very likely. Personally, I would be happy to see almost any régime in Russia other than the present one. I can imagine governments arising on the periphery of the Soviet Union which would be infinitely preferable to Soviet domination. I can imagine this happening in the Ukraine, in the Caucasian lands, in Central Asia, and of course, in the Baltic republics, not to mention the whole of Soviet-dominated Eastern Europe where Soviet rule is an insult and an anachronism.

For example, if the Uzbeks, or Mongolians, or the nationalities near the Sinkiang areas, want to break away from Russia, and a situation arises—perhaps as a result of Sino-Soviet troubles over Iran or Pakistan—in which they have some hope of doing so, then our sympathies should be firmly with them.

It seems to me quite fantastic—and I am sure Kennan would not wish to say what I'm going to say now, but my impression is that he does imply it—that whereas it is absolutely right that Ghanaians, and Nigerians, and Ugandans should break away from the British Empire, it is utterly wrong that the Uzbeks should have an independent Uzbek state, or that there should be an autonomous Ukraine, or that Poles should live in a free Poland.

Of course (to take the Polish example), it is perfectly true that, during its periods of independence, Poland had many bad rulers, and the Polish régime on the eve of the Second World War was very disagreeable (though not as black as it is now painted); and one can imagine that in some future independent Poland another unpleasant régime might arise. But do Poles as Poles, or the subject-nations of the Soviet Union, have less right to independence than Zaireans or Dahomeyans? This seems to me quite absurd.

OF COURSE, ONE CAN SEE NO alternative Russian government in sight, but we can see Russian figures appearing on the scene inside the Soviet Empire who reject the régime as it now is. They offer penetrating criticisms of it from a patriotic Russian point of view, and from the point of view of freedom and social justice. Russians like Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, to take only the two best known, are at least in the same league, intellectually and morally, as were Herzen, Chernyshevsky and the Aksakovs; and although the parallel between Solzhenitsyn and the 19th-

century Slavophiles, and Sakharov and the 19th-century Westernisers, is much overdrawn, there are similarities.

What is fundamentally different between then and now is that, in the 19th century, it was possible for various groups of people who aspired to "a better Russia" to believe that they could achieve it, first, by constitutional action, and if that proved impossible, then by conspiracy and revolution. Overthrow of the Czarist régime by force and violence appeared to them a noble task for which the visionaries eagerly gave their lives.

But when the October Revolution came and Soviet despotism replaced the Czarist autocracy, tens of millions of people perished. The memory of that ghastly disaster is present in the minds of Russians today; it fundamentally colours their attitude to overthrowing the Communist régime, so that it has become very difficult for any intelligent Russian to take the old romantic view of revolution. They don't want to start the suffering all over again, not unlike the post-Franco Spaniards who look askance at having yet another brutal civil war.

Therefore change in the Soviet Empire is not going to come (at any rate as far as the conscious desire of the radical critics of the régime is concerned) by the same methods as it came in 1917. But that does not mean it will never come, nor that we should not wish it to come, nor that we should not try to help if and when it does come.

KENNAN BELIEVES that the access to power of the apparently heterodox West European Communist parties, especially the Italian, would be more likely to prove a serious problem for Moscow than for the political cohesion and security of the West. He argues that an electoral success of the Italian Communists would provide an alternative pole of ideological orientation for the East European parties which would further weaken Soviet leadership and authority.

The Russians are certainly worried by the prospect of yet another rival centre of Communist influence. But I rather doubt whether this would be considered by them to be sufficient to counteract the advantages to be derived from having Communists in power in Italy or France.

The spectacle of West European Communists in power behaving in a fairly constitutional and libertarian way would certainly make it much easier for Hungarian or Czech Communists to say "Why shouldn't our régime be more free, too?" Judging by the way they reacted in 1956 and 1968, the Russians would be hideously worried by the thought. The feedback from a democratically behaving West European Communist Party, even though the democratic

behaviour were only temporary, would surely alarm Moscow.

But does it follow that this threat to the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe is so strong, and of such potential advantage to the Western democracies, that we should all positively desire that the Italian Communists enter the government? Or, to put it the other way round, are we convinced that the Soviet leaders are *so* alarmed by the possibility of this side-effect that they would prefer that the Italian Communists *not* be in the government? On balance the presence of Italian and French Communists in government would be a greater long-term advantage to Moscow than the ideological risks involved in Eastern Europe. With that advantage in prospect the Soviet leaders would willingly accept the risks of the feedback, and in time take the necessary political and military measures to counteract them.

Once in power, how long would it be before the West European Communists would begin to split, and gradually eliminate, their coalition partners? They have well-tried methods for getting a foothold then widening the foothold, and finally booting out all non-Communist forces. They are past masters at isolating, within the leadership of non-Communist parties, those individuals who are strong and capable of standing up to them. We saw this repeatedly in Hungary and Czechoslovakia in 1946–48. True, they had, in these two countries, the Red Army to help them, which they would not have in Italy. However, the evidence which has come to light from Czech sources since 1968 about the way the Communists got power in Czechoslovakia in 1948 suggests that the Soviet factor was rather less important than we thought at the time—and that clever manoeuvres, the infiltration of other parties, and suborning of individuals by skilful Communist agents were more important than we thought. My feeling is that the Italian Communists would show themselves very skilled at these arts, and that the stupidity and venality of some Italian Christian Democrats would give them all the openings they need.

KENNAN ATTACHES much greater importance to the national colouring—and with it, to the innate heterodoxy—of the West European Communists than I would. He would probably point to China, which enjoyed Soviet support for many years and was a fervent promoter of Moscow's orthodoxy, but nevertheless ended up as the Soviet Union's most bitter, and perhaps most lethal, critic. And he might say that this kind of heresy is more dangerous for Moscow (because it undermines Soviet authority from within the world Communist movement) than any straight-

forward hostility on the part of the capitalist West. By the same token, Italo-Communism, which would cut close to the bone of the soft tissue protecting the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, would be more dangerous still.

Well, theoretically it might. But the issue is not very likely to arise in an analogous way. The conflict between Russia and China was due not only to disagreements about Marxism-Leninism, but above all to the fact that there was a profound conflict of interest between the Soviet Russian Empire and the Chinese land-mass. There are no conflicts of that hard sort between Russia and Italy, so that I can see no reason why a Communist or part-Communist Italian government should be automatically at odds with Moscow. Yugoslavia was an entirely different case, because the Yugoslavs had belonged to the area of Soviet hegemony, were later expelled from the Communist bloc, and have been a great nuisance to Moscow ever since. There is a precise conflict of interests between the Yugoslav and the Russian states, which is not the case between the Russian state and Italy.

The question is whether an Italian example would provide an alternative heresy in those parts of the world in which the Soviet Communists would hope to get control. One can see that the Italian and French Communist deviations might make an appeal in Germany, in Britain, and in the smaller West European countries. But I hardly think they would have much of an effect outside Europe. In Africa and Asia, the Soviet message would continue to make its appeal partly because the methods with which Russia upgraded itself from an under-developed country to a super-power are thought to have a direct relevance to the modernizing problems of Africa and Asia; and, above all, because Soviet Russia has world-scale military power behind it. A sophisticated Euro-Communism in the Third World would make little more sense than a Westminster type of parliamentary democracy—or so the African and Asian politicians, with careers to make, would think.

In any case, the Soviet leaders would not wish "socialism with a human face" to be the permanent Communist answer in Italy and France. They would require these two countries to become Soviet-type states in the fullness of time; but, in the meantime, they want to see Communists in power, and the transitional phase could be very useful to them.

KENNAN FEELS that if "Finlandisation" were to overtake parts of Europe—and he doubts whether it would—the blame would have to be borne entirely by ourselves. There is certainly a

loss of nerve in Western society which affects our political class more than any other. I doubt whether it has infected the whole body politic in any significant sense. If one tried to find out in 1650, or 1750 or 1850 whether the British farmer or working man had any views on foreign affairs, one would have found that he had no views at all and didn't much care. But he accepted the leadership of those who did care, and those who did care knew a great deal, and even if they weren't too well versed in the affairs of foreign countries, they knew about their own interests and had the will to give leadership. People wanted to be led, and they expected leadership.

What has changed? Sticking to Britain for the moment, compared to 30 or 40 years ago, it is not that the mass of the British people have abandoned their sense of being a nation, or their wish to maintain a certain way of life (the mass of people are, of course, as indifferent as they always have been); but there is nobody leading them. The decay is in the political class; but to abandon the Western countries just because this decay exists verges on madness.

I completely agree with Kennan where he says it is really monstrous that the West European nations should make so little effort in their own defence, leaving it to the Americans to shoulder the brunt of the burden. He points out that in terms of wealth, manpower, and military potential, Western Europe is well able to stand up to the Russians even without any American backing. This is quite true. But it is also true that *the will to do* is not there. This presents the American rulers with a choice.

It is most unfair that the American taxpayer should go on paying for so large a part of Europe's defence. It is most repugnant that the American citizen should assume the risk, even if it is a small one, of having his cities devastated by Russian nuclear weapons in order to deter a Soviet threat to Germans, Frenchmen, and Englishmen who won't undertake all the expenses necessary to ensure their own effective defence. But can the Americans afford to do otherwise? Can they afford to let Europe collapse?

THE ANSWER IS that they cannot, because if the whole of Western Europe were taken over by the Russians, after all the inevitable bloodletting, starvation, deportations and so on, what was left of Western Europe would still represent a formidable industrial and economic asset; and if this were used by the Soviet Union to complete the encirclement of the United States, America would be immensely vulnerable and, ultimately, doomed, regardless of the domestic repercussions of these changes inside the United States polity.

Equally, as long as the Soviet leaders think it is *possible*—no more than that, but possible—that, if they take certain types of action against Western Europe, the United States *may* use nuclear weapons against them, they will not take that chance. Twenty years ago one would have said that it was certain that, if the Soviet Union invaded Federal Germany, the Americans would immediately present Moscow with a nuclear ultimatum. Now it is by no means certain; but neither is it certain that they won't: and the doubt in the Soviet leaders' mind is sufficient to prevent a catastrophe.

That doubt has to be paid for by the American taxpayer, and by an element of fear and risk unjustly imposed on the American citizen. But looking at the price they are paying from the purely American point of view, it is better that Americans should go on paying that price than that they should risk disaster. It may be a very immoral plea I am making, but it is, I think, a realistic one. And that, in my view, is the answer to Kennan's question: "Is Western Europe worth defending?" I accept many of Kennan's bitter arguments in saying that Western Europe does not "deserve" to be defended, but nevertheless I think his conclusion is wrong from the point of view of America's national interest.

At the same time I believe that deep down under our pessimism there is a basic optimism which tells us that Western Europe's apparent indifference to its future and the abdication of Europe's political will cannot remain permanent features of European life. I don't believe the struggle against the abdication of Europe is finally lost. It is up to us, Europeans, to stand up for ourselves, in the first instance by combating our defeatism.

KENNAN IS VERY CONSCIOUS of the dangers of the non-existence of a Western policy for Eastern Europe. What, he asks, are we going to do if one of the East European countries manages to free itself from Soviet domination and presents itself on our doorstep? Can we afford to ignore it? Can we afford to aggravate our relations with Moscow by pulling that East European country into NATO?

Half of me agrees with Kennan, the other half does not. It seems to me it was absolutely right and necessary that those West European countries that were not under Soviet domination, and were willing to do so, should form a military alliance with each other and the United States. I also believe that NATO must continue to exist because the only guarantee of the independence of the NATO states is their determination to use force if threatened.

At the same time I am very conscious that

people on the other side of the border—Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Rumanians—constitute European nations, whereas the Russians do not. I can't put this into precise definitions. It is one of those truths anyone travelling in Eastern Europe with a modicum of knowledge of European culture and history recognises at once. Indeed, the differences between these East European peoples and the Russians are much more striking than they were ever before. In the 19th century, the educated élite in Russia were Europeans on a par with their opposite numbers in France and Germany. They aren't now.

The cultural division in Europe, the "Iron Curtain" in terms of ways of thinking and lifestyles, is not between the NATO countries and Eastern Europe, but along the borders of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Rumania with the Soviet Union. The concept of Europe, to which I am emotionally and intellectually very sensitive, is a cultural and historical concept; or it is nothing. Therefore, when we speak of Europe, we must include those nations on the far side of the East/West divide which, historically and culturally, belong to Europe but are at present not allowed to be part of it.

I have always been unhappy about the term "European" as the first adjective in EEC. EEC covers only Carolingian lands—all countries which were part of the empire of Charles the Great. Europe since (say) the 13th century has been much more than this. It has included all the East European lands now under Soviet domination. And unless the flow of culture between the Eastern and Western parts of Europe is restored, we can only speak of a truncated Europe. Here I am in complete agreement with George Kennan.

What can we do about all this? Perhaps we can only talk about it at present; but talk is not unimportant. Talking about Eastern Europe even in that ineffectual forum, the United Nations, is not entirely useless. It is extraordinary that, for 30 years past, British, American, French, Scandinavian and other members of the United Nations have taken infinite pains never under any circumstances to point out that there is one, great, imperialistic, oppressive empire in the world, the Soviet Empire, in which about 130 million Russians dominate 200 million other people; that one third of the population of Europe is under Russian colonial rule. The Soviet Union is the last remaining great imperialist power, and most of its colonial subjects are Europeans.

There are also something like fifty million Asians, most of them Muslims. It is also true that the Soviet Russian empire, unlike the old European Christian empires, persecutes Islam as a religion—sometimes more violently and some-

times less, but always with a sustained propaganda campaign of insults. The Soviet rulers woo the Muslims in the Arabic-speaking lands—both governments and peoples, both millionaire oil-sheikhs and penniless fellaheen. But inside the Soviet borders Islam is denounced as a superstition; and though there are a few mosques, kept as show-pieces, where worship goes on, the great majority of Muslims find themselves inhibited or discriminated against if they try to practise their faith.

THIS SOVIET COLONIALISM, victimising nearly two hundred million Europeans and nearly fifty million Asians, is something that Western governments and Western mass media have kept quiet about for most of the time in the last twenty years. There have been occasional exceptions—at the time of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 and the Prague Spring in 1968—and every now and then someone at the United Nations has uttered a few words about the Soviet Empire in Asia. But these have been flashes in the pan. For twenty years and more, spokesmen of Communist-controlled governments have poured forth anti-imperialist rhetoric and abuse against Western governments (which have given independence to one Asian and African territory after another), and have worked uninterruptedly—and rather successfully—to get the spokesmen of these Asian and African governments to join in the chorus. And all the time the Western spokesmen in the United Nations have sat there and said nothing. Why?

Is it because Western statesmen, in their wisdom, are convinced that none of this "rhetoric" matters? Does it really not matter that it has now become accepted by everyone, including the vast public of the West, that Africa's Upper Volta is entitled to Independence for its desert nomads—but that the peoples of Turkestan, with three thousand years of civilisation behind them, are not? Is it "enlightened" to praise Mr Samora Machel as a liberator of the people of Mozambique, but "criminal" to mention President Thomas Masaryk, the liberator of Czechoslovakia in 1918, because he once disagreed with Lenin? Doesn't it matter that the educated class of Western nations (and of Third World nations) is conditioned year after year to accept lies as truth? Surely this is nonsense. Surely the truth must be told, not so much in the interests of the Poles and Czechs (who may be condemned to live for many years more under the Soviet Russian imperial jack-boot) as in the interest of the Western and the African peoples—and indeed the Russian people—which cannot prosper on a foundation of inexhaustible mendacity.

Of course, when one says this sort of thing, one hears at once parrot-cries about confrontation. One must not weaken détente—or provoke Soviet anger—by telling the truth. But why not? Does détente mean unending and unlimited liberty for the Soviets to vilify, to exaggerate, and to revile us for crimes and errors (and, of course, we have plenty to feel guilty about), and also to invent other crimes which we never committed . . . but no liberty at all for anybody to say anything about their crimes? Are “offences against détente” by definition only Western acts.

I am not asking for confrontation; I am not suggesting that we should fly 12,000 Chilean troops across the ocean to join an Uzbek liberation movement in Soviet Central Asia. I am asking a simple question: why is it that we go on with this moral and political disarming of our own peoples (and of the New Nations) by not telling the truth about the Soviet empire?

One further point. The Soviet rulers allowed the Finns to rule themselves the way they wanted—no Finnish Communist dictatorship, and no falsification of Finnish history or Finnish culture. Now perhaps it would be too big a risk for the Soviet leaders to allow the Poles and Czechs as much liberty as the Finns have; and if they did, they might find the Estonians and Ukrainians and Georgians asking for the same thing. But at least they could stop this squalid business of national humiliation; of distorting national culture and traditions, of making proud peoples perform ritual kowtows towards superior Russian civilisation. This at least would go some of the way towards taking the detonators out of the explosive material which is piled up in Central and Eastern Europe. These set off small explosions in 1956 and 1968, and will certainly set off more in the future—when we cannot be sure that the effect will be limited, as it was in those years.

This is also the Soviet interest, not just ours. But it is something that only they can do, not we. We can't get the Poles to accept indefinite national humiliation; the Poles are not ours to hand over. Helsinki could not and did not change that, and this could be something that we might explain to the Russians and help them to understand. How and when—how much by public speaking and how much by secret diplomacy—is a matter which the professionals should have views about; that is what nations employ the professionals for. But my impression is that no one is even thinking about this.

But wouldn't our outspokenness about Eastern Europe risk unleashing rebellion there? It didn't in 1956; it was Stalinism—Russification, the AVO Secret Police and Rakosi's brutalitarianism—that made the Hungarians rise, not the words of President Eisenhower or Foster Dulles. The

threat of upheavals and war comes from Soviet repression, not from the fact that we talk about it. The Soviet leaders themselves must be made to realise that it is their policy of antagonising the East European nations that is creating the danger for them—a danger which surely some Soviet leaders would genuinely like to escape, and it is up to us to help them to do so. The essential truth is that Soviet policy manufactures rebellion. It is the humiliation of historic nations, as distinct from mere domination by a powerful neighbour, that creates fatal resentments. This policy has turned the middle of Europe into a powder magazine.

I haven't answered Kennan's question: “What should our policy be to Eastern Europe?” I can't come up with a magic formula, but I'm sure we must show that we realise the realities and must go on saying so. We must be neither timid nor naive, and here one can quote Kennan against Kennan—the old Kennan, who was extremely critical of Roosevelt's infantile trust of Stalin, against the new Kennan as he appears in *ENCOUNTER'S* “From Containment . . . to Self-Containment.” How right the old Kennan was! And how much the old Kennan's attitude is, *mutatis mutandis*, still the only appropriate one for us to take!

KENNAN'S ANXIETY to avoid the threat of a nuclear holocaust leads him close to advocating unilateral American nuclear disarmament and the gradual withdrawal of United States forces from Europe.

I don't go along with him on that. I am convinced that the present rulers of the Soviet Union are determined to have the entire range of weapons to fight every kind of war there can be, from local wars to the all-out nuclear conflict. They believe that, in the last resort, they can win a nuclear war, and that the world that comes out of the ruins will be one they will control.

Of course, when Kennan says that no government would willingly start a nuclear war, I agree with him: it is difficult to believe that one would. But given a sufficient degree of American disarmament, and enough political and military retreats, a situation might arise in which the Soviet Government, with its eyes on the main chance, might conclude that a nuclear ultimatum would produce results. If it did, that would (for the time being anyhow) be the end of the matter. But if it did not, it would then find itself boxed into a corner where it would have to use nuclear weapons or lose face and credibility.

But there is another kind of situation which worries me more because it is less improbable. European demarcation lines being firm, it is very unlikely that war will break out in Europe in the

foreseeable future. But there are many other parts of the world where there are no such lines. Consider the dangers implicit in the Cuban invasion of Angola—this terrifying spectacle of 12,000 highly trained and heavily armed troops being transported in Russian aircraft across the Atlantic Ocean, right under the nose of the United States, and getting away with it. It isn't a matter of rights and wrongs in Angola. It is certainly not a matter of whether Vorster's treatment of the Blacks is unjust or not—it obviously is unjust. But the spectacle of an odious imperialist power spreading its tentacles without serious repercussions frightens me.

What I am afraid of is that a situation might occur in which Soviet or Soviet-sponsored forces were so deeply committed that the Americans would suddenly be jolted into realising what was going on: "Good God, we can't afford to let this happen. . . ." They would then start reacting clumsily, and guns would go off.

I am reminded of Germany before the first World War. The old doctrine that World War I was brought about by the wicked imperialism of a sinister Hohenzollern William II is obviously nonsense. Another doctrine which says that the War was due to the "conflicting interests of British and German capitalism" is equally ill-founded; there were all kinds of conflicts among the great powers which played a causal part.

But something of great consequence happened between the departure of Bismarck and the outbreak of the war in 1914. A process set in which made certain conflicts, which had already been there but had been manageable by statesmen like Bismarck, entirely unmanageable. And that process was the appearance of an arrogant state of mind in a large section of the German public (it was symbolised by the Kaiser, though by no means created by him). If you look for one social class which was more to blame for this rising arrogance than any other, it was my own class—academics, *gymnasium* teachers, and university lecturers. German spokesmen, led by the Emperor, were beating their fists on the table whenever there was a minor international crisis: "Germany will be heard . . . Germany is a *Weltmacht* . . . we will make ourselves felt everywhere", until the other European governments began to be worried and had to ask themselves: "What are these people going to do next?"

This arrogant rise of a parvenu power, with tremendous national forces at its disposal, is exactly what we are seeing today in the shape of Soviet hegemony spreading to the South Atlantic and the Indian Ocean. It is symbolised by the attitude of people like Marshal Grechko and all the other Soviet mailed-fist bullies, both civilian politicians and generals.

Khrushchev, with all his brashness, was not like this, much less Stalin (who had a minor touch of Bismarck about him—a dangerous enemy, certainly, but a very cool, self-controlled man who took no risks). But this new class of Soviet imperialists frightens me. If there is a danger of war in the world today, it comes from their aggressiveness, and from the reaction they are sooner or later bound to provoke.

TO SUMMARISE, I AGREE WITH a large part of George Kennan's argument; and I believe that he agrees with me about the unity of Europe as a cultural concept—a unity which cannot be confined to the Carolingian lands, nor exclude the misnamed "Easterners." But the one deep difference between us concerns the priority of the dangers with which Europeans and Americans alike are faced.

I do not believe that the dangers of pollution, crime, drugs and moral decadence (all of which I recognise as very serious and very pressing) are more urgent or more menacing than the danger of Soviet imperialism. The Russians, I agree, are not "going to drop atom bombs on us." Soviet Russia, I agree, has a backward economy, a miserable agriculture, and an obsolete bureaucratic mechanism whose joints creak with rust and old age. But the rulers of the USSR have vast military power; assign an overriding priority to increasing their armed forces of all types; and are themselves driven by a combination of armour-plated self-righteousness, will to power, and lust for more power over more people, which make them extremely formidable. It remains their purpose to impose their antiquated form of tyranny on every new victim which comes within their reach. Whether armed force has to be used, or whether submission can be obtained by threats and subversion, is for them a matter not of principle but of expediency. Whenever they meet with no counterforce, material or moral, with no will to self-defence, they advance. There is no sign at all that their attitude is changing, or that the younger *apparatchiks* who will succeed them are made of milder stuff.

It is no doubt true that the societies of the West have more sophisticated economies, technologies, intelligentsias, and more sophisticated forms of consumption and pleasure. None of these will help them if they give a low priority to their own defence (political and moral, no less than economic and military) or fail to distinguish between friend and foe.

The crocodile is a more primitive zoological specimen than the human being; but if a man steps blindfold and naked into a crocodile's river, it is the crocodile who will prevail.



Column

I DO NOT KNOW IF Mr Jack Jones will carry out his threat to take legal proceedings against Mr Paul Johnson for his furious attack on the trade unions in an article, *Towards the Parasite State*, which was origi-

nally published in the *New Statesman* and reprinted in part in the *Daily Mail*; but I rather hope that he will. The spectacle of Mr Jones (the Emperor Jones, as Mr Johnson calls him) testifying on oath in a court of law, in the face of hostile cross-examination, to all those virtues of the British trade union movement which he himself so strikingly embodies would surely add to the gaiety of nations. I myself find it hard to believe that he would not be laughed out of court. The Emperor might suddenly find that he had no clothes.

I really do not think Mr Jones ought to risk it. Our trade union leaders, especially Mr Jones, Mr Len Murray, Mr Hugh Scanlon, have recently adopted a truly Roman air of *gravitas* and piety, of selfless devotion in the face of the awesome responsibilities they have assumed. Mr Podsnap has nothing on them; and I do not think that they, or the movement they represent, would come out any better than Mr Podsnap from the kind of ruthless inquisition to which they might be subjected by a skilful counsel; the whole act might come to pieces in their hands. If I were a loyal trade unionist, with the interests of the movement at heart, I think I would beg Mr Jones to desist from legal action; or perhaps give him the kind of advice G. K. Chesterton gave F. E. Smith after a more than usually flagrant piece of political charlatantry: "Chuck it, Smith! . . ."

Yet somehow or other one feels that Mr Johnson deserves some kind of answer, even though not from Mr Jones and not in a court of law. His article is surely one of the most ferocious attacks on the unions ever to be published in a reputedly left-wing journal. Something seems to have soured the pure milk of socialism which once nourished the *New Statesman*. If only a part of what Mr Johnson has to say about the unions were true, we should be in a very bad way indeed; if it were all true, then our situation would be beyond repair.

PAUL JOHNSON ACCUSES the unions, *inter alia*, of reducing the British working man to the condition of a medieval serf, thus reversing the historic and revolutionary process which Sir Henry Maine

described as the transition from status to contract; of a ruthless pursuit of power, not in the interests of their members, but of their leaders, who constitute a self-perpetuating oligarchy with no interests except their own; of rigging their elections; of fiddling their books; of despatching their leaders on boozing-and-dining excursions abroad which serve no purpose except to bring themselves, their leaders and their country into ridicule and contempt; of—but there is hardly any corrupt practice of which Mr Johnson does not accuse the unions. He expressly compares them, indeed, to the corrupt Whig oligarchy of the 18th century and Mr Jones to its manager, the Duke of Newcastle, who was so notorious a manipulator of a system whose benefits were strictly confined to himself and his friends: "There is enough pasture for all the sheep."

It is a charming conceit; and all the more so because Mr Jones has by now acquired an almost prerogative right to become himself, if not a Duke, at least a Baron, and with the same claim as the Duke to his fair share of the enormous patronage now exercised by the state, as it once was by the Crown, and shortly to be extended, if Mr Jones and his friends have their way, by the formal acknowledgment of the right of the unions to be represented on the board of every commercial enterprise in this country, including the clearing banks and the major insurance companies.

It is, in its way, a very formidable indictment, and it is a pity that in making it Mr Johnson's voice should rise to such a pitch of almost hysterical anger that many people will dismiss it, for that reason alone, as exaggerated and overdrawn. And yet, if it were true, what other reaction could there be but anger and that kind of hysteria which comes of the frustration one feels when one has identified something unmistakably evil and knows there is almost nothing one can do about it?

It would have been better, I think, or at least more persuasive to many people who cannot bring themselves to think that the internal affairs of the unions are quite as bad as Mr Johnson thinks they are, if Mr Johnson had adopted a lower tone—something for instance in the manner of Dunning's famous motion in a Committee of the Commons in 1780 that "... the power of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished." For that, *mutatis mutandis*, is what Mr Johnson wishes to say; and I believe that in putting forward such a proposition he would have had the support of the great majority of the people of this country, including trade unionists, many of whom have begun to think that the claims put forward by their leaders on their behalf, far from advancing

their interests, threaten to involve them and everyone else in an all-embracing disaster.

IT IS OF COURSE EASY to say this. But how can that majority make its voice heard? Significantly enough, Mr Johnson does not think that this can be done by a General Election followed by a change of government. His own preference is for a referendum; and I assume that if one were to be held, the proposition to be put to the country would be in the form of Dunning's: "that the power of the unions has increased, is increasing and ought to be diminished".

Like Mr Johnson, I have no doubt what the result of such a referendum would be. But what then? Parliament today, in fact if not in form, has no power to impose legislation on the unions against the wishes of their leaders, because of the ultimate sanction they possess in their ability to wreck our economy at any moment they choose. Whether in fact they would, in an ultimate confrontation, choose to use their power in this way, no one can say; but it is a risk which no government can afford to take, and perhaps ought not to take. Mr Johnson at least has no doubts that, if faced with such a decision, the union leaders would prefer economic disaster to a reduction in their power: "Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven. . . ."

In this sense, that they have an ultimate deterrent which no one can afford to challenge the power of the union leaders today is, by the standards of a parliamentary democracy, a strictly illegitimate and unconstitutional one. Or perhaps, rather, it would be true to say that the constitution no longer corresponds to the actual distribution of power in this country; and for that reason it is rapidly becoming unworkable, except with the assistance of a number of fictions and conventions which help to conceal the true facts of the case. The *pays légal* no longer corresponds to the *pays réel*; and this contradiction cannot and will not be resolved until Parliament is once again in a position to govern, if necessary, without the assent of the unions, or alternatively, the constitution is altered to give legal recognition to the power which the unions today exercise illegitimately.

IT USED TO BE SAID that Parliament could do anything except change a man into a woman. That is no longer true. It can change a man into a woman. But what it cannot do is to legislate in defiance of the expressed will of the unions. The supremacy of Parliament is today a legal fiction; it will become an even greater one when, with the enthusiastic approval of the Trade Union Congress, the government's Devolution bill becomes law. When countries are governed by

fictions they cease to be able to cope with reality. Perhaps that is the fundamental reason for the quite remarkable incompetence of recent governments. Either like Mr Edward Heath's they try to behave as if in fact the unions do not possess the power which they do, and as a result can no longer govern; or like Sir Harold Wilson's and Mr Jim Callaghan's they recognise the facts of the case, and are thereby necessarily forced to sacrifice the general to a sectional interest.

WHAT THEN is to be done? I am not sure there is anything to be done; things are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be, as Bishop Butler once said. But if this is too gloomy a view, as I hope it is, it will only prove to be so if everyone, including trade unionists themselves, becomes convinced of the illegitimacy of trade union power as it is exercised at present. It took many long years of incessant agitation, propaganda, and social unrest before the oligarchy which governed Britain at the beginning of the 19th century could be persuaded that it could no longer exercise the power which it once had exercised. We can hardly afford to wait as long as that. But Paul Johnson's violent article may prove to be a first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of the trade unions; and as such I think it is to be welcomed. But its effect, I think, would be the greater if Mr Jones were to carry out his threat of taking legal proceedings; for in the course of such an action we could hardly fail to learn a great deal more than we do now about how the unions actually do operate, and how, as an example to others, they manage their own affairs; and this would be to everyone's advantage, not least the trade union movement itself.

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I WONDER WHAT Mr George Kennan, in his Pennsylvania retreat, is thinking about Dr Henry Kissinger's visit to Africa. The essence of what Mr Kennan had to say in his recently published interview with George Urban (ENCOUNTER, September) was that, since the United States has no idea how to solve its own troubles, it should refrain from trying to solve those of other people, should instead cultivate its own garden, and should reduce any interference in other people's affairs to an irreducible minimum. It was also Mr Kennan's view that where and when such interference was unavoidable, even in the forms of aid and assistance, it should only be undertaken at the direct request of the countries involved, and that they should publicly acknowledge that such requests had been made

before the United States committed itself to any action.

I myself have considerable sympathy with such a point of view, particularly when I consider the disastrous results, both for the Americans and for others, of recent cases of US intervention in various quarters of the globe. And like Mr Kennan, I do not regard this as a proposal that the USA should retreat into glorious isolation, but rather as a simple recognition that, immense though American resources are, there are very narrow limitations on their capacity to intervene successfully in other people's affairs.

These limitations are as much a matter of America's intellectual and spiritual resources, and of her historical experience, as of her material strength. America has made a late appearance on the stage of world history as a great world power. This year she has been proud to celebrate her Bicentennial anniversary; but two hundred years is a very short time in the history of a nation, and of those two hundred years in the United States very few have been spent in learning the difficult art of how to conduct one's relations with other countries.

Dr Kissinger's visit to Africa seems to me to show a striking disregard for such considerations, and for the caution and discretion which, in Mr Kennan's view, should characterise the US's conduct of its foreign relations. It is true that Dr Kissinger has at least paid lip-service to Mr Kennan's views by insisting that his visit to Africa was being undertaken with the encouragement of all the parties concerned. The Black African governments, on the other hand, are reported to have claimed that Dr Kissinger went to Africa in response to no invitation except his own.

Until very recently the United States, and Dr Kissinger himself, have shown little or no interest in Black Africa, and certainly there had never been any deep sense among Americans that Southern Africa was an area in which their vital interests were involved. The USA was fortunate enough to keep free of the intense competition between the European powers to carve Empires for themselves out of Africa; and Americans have also been spared the bitter disillusionment which followed for some, when the "winds of change" began to blow and they proceeded to reverse the process of African colonisation. For this reason it might be said that Dr Kissinger has the advantage of approaching Africa with clean hands and an unprejudiced mind, and that he has no obvious self-interest to

serve there. He flies to Africa as a white dove of peace, unstained by any of the crimes of the colonial powers, and as such can reasonably expect to be received with a benevolence and good will equal to his own. Others might say that lack of knowledge and experience of African affairs makes Dr Kissinger a singularly ill-equipped arbitrator in African quarrels which, after all, are of some complexity; that his innocence is not that of a dove but of a lamb dressed for the slaughter.

But Dr Kissinger, whatever the fate of his enterprise, goes to Africa at his own, and his country's risk. What is important to Britain is that, in his efforts to achieve an immediate transition to majority rule in Rhodesia, and a gradual alleviation of the horrors and miseries of *apartheid* in South Africa, he should not involve this country in the responsibilities he must inevitably assume if his efforts are to have any prospect of success. It has been suggested that his plans for Africa involve the presence of a British peace-keeping force in Rhodesia to maintain law and order during the transition to majority rule, and her resumption of the powers she once enjoyed there before Mr Smith's unilateral declaration of independence.

It is devoutly to be hoped that, if such reports are true, Dr Kissinger's plans have received no encouragement from the British government. This country, already nearly involved in Irish civil war in Ulster, and only with the greatest difficulty maintaining a minimum of law and order there, is in no condition to play a significant role in Southern Africa, even with the greatest possible support and encouragement from the United States. Keeping the peace in Rhodesia is something which is well beyond our means. It would be futile to imagine that the surrender of white power in Rhodesia, and the establishment of majority rule, can be achieved without some measure of disorder and bloodshed; and this country's first interest is to have no part in it.

Dr Kissinger, on leaving for Africa, was reported as hoping to impart his own personal "impetus" to negotiations which will avoid total racial war; but it is doubtful if even his diplomatic virtuosity is by now capable of averting bloodshed in some form or another. I have a feeling that, even if Dr Kissinger does not, Mr Callaghan should pay serious attention to the lessons Mr Kennan wishes to teach America and, with respect to Africa, apply them to our own country. R

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Interpreting Pareto

The Marx of the Bourgeoisie?—By RAYMOND ARON

THE SOCIOLOGISTS up to and including the generation of the turn of the century (Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, Vilfredo Pareto) were none the less philosophers of politics, if not political scientists. Whether they belonged to the tradition of Auguste Comte or that of Karl Marx, the macro-sociologists were concerned as much with political as with social problems.

Positivists and Marxists departed from the tradition by taking for their central theme “*la société*” and not “*la cité*”, sometimes even assuming a more or less strict connection between social conflicts and the mode of government and administration. Auguste Comte posited that a social model usually implies a particular way of managing public affairs; the organisation of life in common and the style of government are alike dependent on the system. Was it not “the illustrious Montesquieu” who for the first time introduced the concept of the social whole and at the same time condemned the compartmentalisation of disciplines? It was a compartmentalisation that was all the more baneful in that it encouraged the metaphysics of the economists, lost in their abstractions, and the illusions of the political scientists (or the politicians), incapable of recognising the real seat of power, the industrialists and not the state counsellors, diplomatic or military.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, according to Comte, failed to establish a State or political régime which satisfied the needs of industrialism. The French Revolution, according to Marx, failed to establish a society in which the liberty and equality it solemnly proclaimed could be brought about. Both of them turned away from the political game, not for the sake of axiological neutrality but with a view to getting down to the essential, to the real (in the sense of the German *Wirklichkeit*: that which is effective).

Whatever the progress towards science achieved by the Big Three in comparison with the founding fathers, the approach of Emile Durkheim and Max Weber does not seem to me

to differ in kind from that of Comte and Marx. Durkheim takes as his point of departure the crisis besetting modern society, and he too seeks its solution not in politics (in the superficial sense of elections, parliament, party rivalries) but in socio-moral reform. The preface to the second edition of *De la division du travail social* (1893) and the theory of corporations bear witness to his inspiration and to this ambition. In his heart of hearts Durkheim was as much a reformer as a scientist—a duality that worried him little since he believed in the possibility of reform based on science.

Max Weber, like Marx, takes conflict and domination as his point of departure. But he makes a clear differentiation between the conflicts of social groups or classes on the one hand and the universal fact of domination (*Herrschaft*) on the other. The destiny of the national entity, e.g. Germany, and not that of the universal proletariat (assuming this notion to be not entirely devoid of historical content), serves him as political and moral reference point, without providing him with the equivalent of the positivist Supreme Being or the Marxist Revolution. In choosing as God or Demon the greatness of the nation, Max Weber binds no one and makes no claim to scientific authority: he consummates the epistemological split between the analysis of society and the maxims of action. Sociology tries to teach us once more, as philosophy did before Marx, to understand society and not to change it.

IF WE HAD TO DEAL with the theme of sociological and political theory in Auguste Comte and Marx, in Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, what procedure would we need to adopt? I perceive three stages:

1. To pinpoint those elements in the historical context which influenced their outlook, nourished their thinking, and orientated their researches.

2. To identify the system or theory which served them to conceptualise, if not to explain,

the world in which they lived or thought they lived.

3. To bring out the implications of their theory, implications which they themselves openly affirmed or which readers or disciples, friends or enemies, could draw from them.

The "political opinions" of the authors themselves, in the normal sense of this expression, occupy only a secondary position in the three phases of the inquiry. The judgments which Emile Durkheim made on parties and parliaments interest us because they reflect his overall interpretation of modern (French) society. The position he took up at the time of *l'affaire Dreyfus* interests us in the same way and for the same reason: it reveals the system of values to which he owed allegiance. His little book on the causes of the first World War and his patriotic fervour between 1914 and 1917 are moving testimonials. But these records of the man do not lead us to the secret of the theorists.

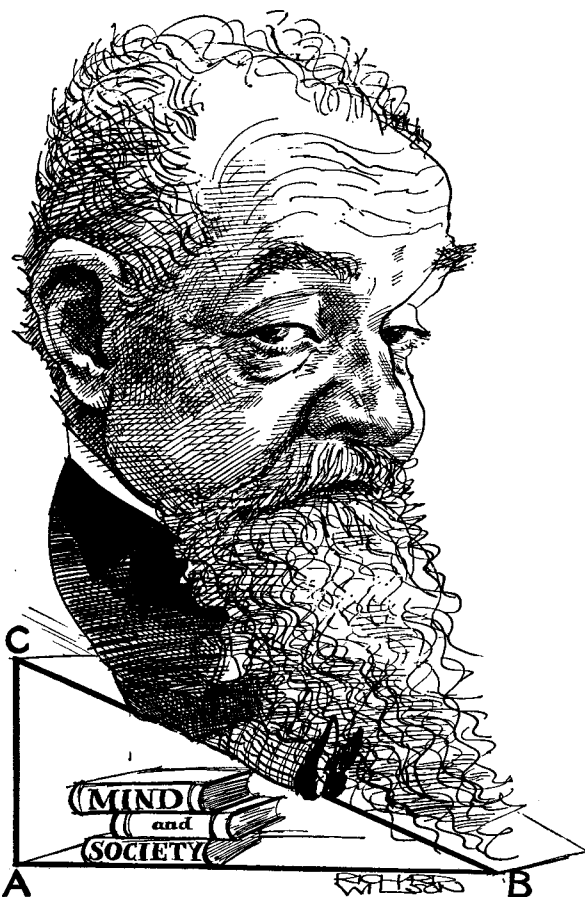
THE SAME distinctions are equally applicable to the work of Max Weber. The three elements—personal experience, theoretical formulation, implications—are linked to one another without becoming merged. The Wilhelmine Empire, with a traditional sovereign, a parliament without power, bureaucratic ministers and a rational administration, provided him with the components of his political typology. Or perhaps one might say that he perceived Wilhelmine Germany through his own typology. The inquiry into the economy of the Eastern territories and the influx of the Polish

peasantry revealed to him some of the characteristic behaviour patterns of modern societies, and this research employed categories and brought out relations that are typically Weberian. It might then seem as though the sociologist and the political observer are merged to such a degree that each of his political opinions is linked to general sociology, and each of his theoretical propositions seems to derive from a judgment made by the political observer.

A PSYCHOANALYST or a Sociologist of Knowledge would probably regard the distinction we have established between the three phases of interpretation as an arbitrary one; in particular, the interaction between personal experience and theoretical interpretation. Nevertheless, I feel that the method as applied to Vilfredo Pareto (1878–1923) will prove helpful.

Vilfredo Pareto enjoys a dual reputation and belongs to two intellectual traditions. As an economist, he was among the theorists of equilibrium, in the wake of Léon Walras, whose chair he occupied at Lausanne. As a political scientist he belongs to a line which began with Machiavelli and will continue as long as there are men who thirst after power and conceal their ambitions, men who rule

and men who lie. On the other hand, the position of Pareto the sociologist remains an ambiguous and disputed one. By way of contributing to the still open controversy on Pareto's strictly sociological thought as well as on the meaning of his political thought, I shall first of all examine his historical experience, the way he saw the societies in which he lived. I shall then proceed to analyse the theoretical or conceptual formulations of his political experience.¹ After this it will be easy for me to show the possible implications of his theory (without, however, going into the



¹ See Vilfredo Pareto, *Mind and Society* translated by A. Bongiorno and Arthur Livingston (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1935, reprinted 1963, 4 vols.; London, Dover Publications); *The Ruling Class in Italy Before 1900*, ed. S. F. Vanni (New York, 1950).

wearisome question of the man's relationship to Fascism).

PARETO CONCENTRATES on three aspects of modern society: representative régimes with competing parties; the class struggle; and the spread of bureaucracy.

As an observer of everyday events as reported in the press, he continually harps on the contrast between the vigour and energy of the syndicalists on the one hand, and the cowardice and weakness of the bourgeoisie on the other. Violence, in the sense which Sorel gave to the word—not so much brutality as the will to power—is henceforth embodied not in the present controllers of government and of the means of production but in agitators who challenge the established régime. Not that Pareto defends the privileges of the powerful out of love for inequality or indifference to the misery of the masses. In theory, he argues that social equilibrium demands an equal virility on the two sides: “Any living creature which shrinks from giving blow for blow and from shedding its adversary's blood thereby puts itself at the mercy of that adversary.”

Take, for example, an analysis from the *Treatise on General Sociology* (paragraph 2147):

“... the feeling is that if revolutionary or merely popular force comes into conflict with the military force of the government the former has all the rights and the latter all the duties, and in particular the duty to submit to everything before using its weapons. Insults, blows, stone-throwing, everything is excusable if it comes from the people, whereas retaliation is absolutely forbidden to the armed forces of the government. The people are always excusable, because the mere presence of armed forces inflames them, and they can surrender with impunity to any impulse. The armed forces, however, must be possessed of inexhaustible patience; when attacked, they must turn the other cheek. Soldiers are expected to be so many ascetic saints; one wonders why they are issued with rifles or sabres instead of rosaries and prayer-books of the religion of Progress.”

² In Pareto's vocabulary, “residues” are sentiments or the expressions of sentiments ingrained in human nature, and “derivations” are intellectual systems of justification by which people camouflage their passions or give an appearance of rationality to propositions or actions which are irrational. Man is in effect an unreasonable and reasoning being. If he rarely behaves in a logical manner, he nevertheless always wishes to make his fellow men believe that he is doing so.

³ The theory of “residues” develops into a classification which amounts to a sort of theoretical analysis of human nature for the use of sociologists. Pareto first of all distinguishes six classes of residues, and then several sub-classes in each. The fifth class of residues is defined by Pareto as “the integrity of the individual and his appurtenances”. Its sub-classes include “the sentiment of equality among inferiors” and “the restoration of integrity by operations [rights of purification of every sort] on the subject of change”, etc.

After making due allowance for the polemical passion, and the typically Paretian exaggeration, a sentiment (or, if you like, a “residue”) can be discerned in this observation (which may be regarded as a “derivation”)²—exasperation with the bourgeoisie for using new myths to camouflage their lack of courage and their desire for gain. Footnote 15 referring to paragraph 2147 seems to me revealing. Commenting on the phrase “the armed forces must be possessed of inexhaustible patience”, he writes:

“One can see this in the derivations resorted to in Latin parliaments every time a conflict breaks out between the police and strikers or demonstrators; it is the characteristic expedient of people who would do the act but not say the word. The syndicalists, for their part, make word and deed conform and thus come much closer to reality. They say that they intend to use force because they are at war with the bourgeoisie. The fact is that this use of force can be met only with the use of force in reply, not with the futile and inconclusive reasonings of our ‘speculators’.”

LET ME NOW RECALL the articles published by Max Weber in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* on the reform of the German constitution. The German sociologist hoped that a more intense parliamentary life would lead to the selection of leaders better adapted to their tasks than the officials chosen by the Emperor to fill ministerial posts. Pareto, on the other hand, observes the Italian and French parliamentarians with an irony bordering on contempt, not because they exploit power for their own ends (all those who hold power do this) but because they are lacking in a quality that is essential to every aristocracy and to the nation itself: namely, vigour, with the resort to force in case of need. The “humanitarian mob” and the “humanitarian fever” provoke Pareto into expressing views in which indignation pervades the scientific analysis, in which a “residue” guides his pen:

“The derivation used by M. Anatole France is copied from a general derivation, very prevalent among humanitarians, which confers the label of ‘unfortunate wretches’, of *malheureux*, upon criminals, and then taking advantage of the ambiguous meaning of the term, concludes that criminals deserve ‘society’s’ most loving care. This is the inspiration of books, such as Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*, by means of which literary men make money by gratifying the humanitarian instincts of the public. A mad dog, too, is an ‘unfortunate wretch’, and in his case, ‘society’ has found no alternative but to match the death that he inflicts upon people with the death that is inflicted upon him” (paragraph 1638)

In another paragraph (1716), *à propos* of the residues of the fifth class,³ Pareto returns to the question of criminals in modern society:

“Never in any period of history have criminals been allowed to be insolent to their judges as they are in

our time. There are trials in criminal courts at which the roles of the presiding judge who questions and the defendant who answers seem to be reversed."

Of course, Pareto knows that he is shocking many of his readers, and he wants to shock them. Nevertheless it would be wrong to ignore this satire on humanitarianism or to put it down simply to provocativeness, a wish to scandalise, a love of paradox, or the ill-humour of a cantankerous professor. If Pareto denounces the humanitarians who invoke the rights of "society" to justify the transfer of the belongings of Peter to Paul and afterwards the rights of the individual to save a criminal from punishment, it is for the explicit purpose of bringing out the contradiction between the derivations and going back to the residues. There can be no doubt that it is also because to him the humanitarians belong to the category of "speculators" who pamper the sentiments of the public and disregard, out of ignorance or venality, the imperatives of the social system. France and Italy compared with Germany and the bourgeoisie compared with the proletarian

movements, seem to him to be weakened and undermined by excessive guile, by a lack of vigour which they camouflage by invoking abstract entities, the gods of our intellectuals—democracy, progress, humanity, socialism.

IN THE *TREATISE*, he twice refers to the Marxist theory of the class struggle. He points out that historical materialism has been coupled with the class struggle with which it need have had no connection, and that the classes have been arbitrarily reduced to two.

"Thus the domain of science was progressively abandoned in favour of excursions into the domain of romance. For the historical materialists sociology became a very easy science. It is idle to waste time and energy discovering the relationships between facts, their uniformities. Any fact recorded by history, any institution described, any political, moral, or religious order exemplified, has its sole cause in the exploitation of the 'proletariat' by the 'bourgeoisie', and in the resistance of the 'proletariat' to this exploitation." (paragraph 830)

In paragraph 1045, on the other hand, where he analyses the residues in Class II ("the persist-

Of Classes, Élites & Socialism

THE SENTIMENT of benevolence men have for their fellows, without which society probably could not exist, is in no way incompatible with the principle of the class struggle. Even the most energetic defence of one's own rights may perfectly well be combined with respect for the rights of others. Each class, if it wishes to avoid being oppressed, must have the strength to defend its interests, but this in no way implies that it must aim at oppressing other classes. On the contrary, experience should teach that one of the best ways of defending one's interests is in fact to take account, with justice, equity and benevolence, of the interests of others.

MANY PEOPLE believe that if one could find a recipe for abolishing "the conflict between labour and capital", the class struggle would automatically disappear. This is an illusion typical of the very numerous class of people who confuse form and substance. The class struggle is merely one form of the struggle for life and what is called "the conflict between labour and capital" is merely one form of the class struggle. In the Middle Ages it was possible to believe that if religious conflicts disappeared, society would have been at peace. These religious conflicts were merely one form of the class struggle. They did disappear, at least partly, and were replaced by socialist conflicts. Let us suppose that collectivism has been established, and that "capital" no longer exists. It is clear that in this case it can no longer be in conflict with labour; but it will merely be one form of the class struggle that has

disappeared, and it will be replaced by others. Conflicts will arise between different types of workers in the socialist state, between "intellectuals" and "non-intellectuals", between different kinds of politicians, between the latter and the people they govern, between innovators and conservatives. Are there really people who seriously imagine that the advent of socialism will completely dry up the springs of social innovation, that the creative ingenuity of the human race will no longer give birth to new projects, that men will not be interested enough to adopt these projects in the hope of acquiring a preponderant position in society?

ANY ÉLITE that is not prepared to give battle to defend its positions is in full decline and must inevitably give way to another élite possessed of the virile qualities it lacks. It is pure day-dreaming to imagine that the humanitarian principles it has proclaimed will be applied to it in return: the victors' implacable cry *Vae victis* will resound in its ears. The knife of the guillotine was being sharpened in the shadows when, at the end of the 18th century, the ruling classes in France set about developing their "sensibility". This idle and frivolous society, living like a parasite off the country, discoursed at its elegant supper parties of delivering the world from superstition and of crushing l'Infâme, little suspecting that it was itself about to be crushed.

Vilfredo Pareto
Les Systèmes Socialistes (1901)

ence of aggregates”),⁴ he mentions the “class struggle” propaganda of the Marxists (but he at once corrects himself: “or rather the circumstances of which it is the expression”) and goes on: “served to arouse or intensify corresponding residues in the ‘proletariat’, or rather in a part of the population.” In *Les Systèmes Socialistes* (1901), he gives even more explicit approval to Marxist sociology in so far as it puts the accent on the class struggle—provided that it does not reduce these classes to two, that it does not attribute all the ills of society to the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie, and does not envisage a classless society after the socialist revolution. The speculators exploit the rentiers, just as much as the bourgeois exploit the proletarians. Proletariat and people are not to be confused; the proletariat only constitutes a part of the people. In short, Pareto eliminates from the theory of the class struggle everything that constituted Marx’s original contribution. The class struggle does not apply to one period of history but to history as a whole; it does not tend towards the simplification of a duel between two classes and towards a final struggle; nor does it disappear with a revolution of any kind whatsoever.

In interpreting the modern world, Pareto is thus much nearer to Marx than Durkheim is. Is he more or less closer than Max Weber? The difficulty in answering this question stems from the fact that Max Weber is reacting to the circumstances of Germany and Pareto to those of France or Italy. Weber’s strictures are reserved not for the “parliamentarians” who, in the Wilhelmine Reich, did not play a primary role. They are sometimes directed against the Emperor, sometimes against the sordid selfishness of the great landowners of East Germany who encouraged the “Polonisation” of the German lands. He, too, takes class domination for granted although, concerned as he is with national greatness, he hopes to “integrate” the working class in the Empire. Unlike Pareto, who is impressed by the energy of the revolutionary syndicalists, he doubts the capacity of the working class (in practice, the Social-Democratic Party) to take the destiny of Germany in hand. In a sense, both Weber and Pareto may be

regarded as vitalisers in the service of the bourgeoisie.

THE THIRD ASPECT of modern society which I have mentioned—bureaucracy—also preoccupies Pareto as well as Weber. The two interpretations are, however, substantially different. Pareto, from the starting-point of pure economics and the liberal model, links bureaucracy closely to the State, to protectionism, to the measures adopted or recommended by the speculators or the politicians in their own interests, on the pretext of distributing wealth more equitably or improving the lot of the masses. However, the final pages of the *Treatise* which evoke the fossilisation of the Roman Empire have a Weberian ring and recall a famous passage in Weber’s *Sociology of Religion*:

“In the Western Empire the fossilisation of society was broken by the barbarian invasion. In the Eastern Empire it remained intact and the effects of ‘planning’ (*organizzazione*) carried to an extreme were to become manifest.”

(paragraph 2610)

Or again:

“Montesquieu very aptly compares the Roman Empire in decline with the Regency in Algiers in his own time. But Algiers did not have a bureaucracy, like the Roman bureaucracy of the decline, to sap every source of individual activity and initiative.”

(paragraph 2608)

He compares the attitude of Priscus Panites with the sort of approach a man of today might use.

“There he had to pay heavy taxes, which were imposed by the votes of a majority that did not pay them. Fewer and fewer people paid them, and they increased out of all proportion in order to meet the enormous costs of government by a demagogic plutocracy. . . . If a law-breaker is in some way connected with the ruling class, his crime goes unpunished; if he is someone, such as a smuggler, who threatens the fiscal privileges of that class, he suffers the penalty laid down by the law. . . . There is indeed a most iniquitous manner of obtaining by influence what ought to be adjudicated by law—by placing oneself at the disposal of the rulers and helping them in the elections through which they obtain power.”

(paragraph 2610)

Finally, the concluding sentences of the *Treatise*:

“. . . about a century ago when freedom was in the ascendant, it was fashionable to condemn the rigid and restrictive institutions of the Byzantine Empire. Now that we are in a period when freedom is on the decline and ‘planning’ in the ascendant, the same institutions are admired and praised. . . . Byzantium shows how far the curve along which our societies are now moving may lead.”

(paragraph 2612)

A near or distant future? Pareto seems to have hesitated on this point.

⁴ The “persistence of aggregates” designates “the human tendency to maintain combinations which have already been formed, to reject changes and to accept imperatives once and for all. . . .” Anything that pertains to the moral order, family organisation, and religious beliefs constitutes the basis of society and is maintained by “the persistence of aggregates” which clashes with the will to violent transformation of politicians and in a more general sense “the instinct of combinations” (which constitutes the first class of residues).

MAX WEBER EVOKED the fossilisation of Egyptian civilisation rather than that of Byzantium. His vision of a possible and baneful future nevertheless resembles Pareto's. Yet a difference of interpretation remains. Weber attributes the slide towards bureaucratic fossilisation neither to demagogues nor to plutocrats, neither to taxes nor to the necessity to pander to electoral clientele—Pareto's description or caricature of the Italian régime under Giolotti. He sees it as a perhaps irresistible movement resulting from the very nature of work in industrial enterprises or of social relations, irrespective of the ownership, whether private or public, of the means of production. Rational planning, stemming from the need to make enterprises financially viable as well as from State management, is gradually encroaching on the whole of social life. In Weber's view, socialism threatens to push the tendency towards planning to the verge of bureaucratic fossilisation. But this threat exists in any case, inherent in the rationalisation imposed on all producers or managers interlinked with one another with a view to effective cooperation.

WHAT THEORETICAL PROBLEMS did Pareto's historical experience present him with? There were basically two. First of all, he had to elucidate the similarity which struck him between traditional religious and political ideologies, the persistence of certain phenomena constituting the socio-political system. Secondly, on the basis of this static theory, he had to account for the general movement of society which the progress of bureaucracy suggested to him. The theory of residues and derivations resolves the first problem, the theory of general equilibrium and of the relations of mutual dependence the second. These two theories are themselves subordinate to a meta-theory, in other words, the Paretian conception of science. I shall briefly summarise this theory.

The only truth is logico-experimental truth; the search for truth requires the construction of an object by means of certain concepts, by means of the erection of a simplified world, abstracted from the concrete world which we perceive. Scientific truth takes no account of essences or any other notion of that sort; it does not go beyond uniformities or regularities. Partial and limited though it is, scientific truth none the less offers the only logical instrument of conduct since the latter presupposes an accord between the combination of means with a view to a pre-determined end and the actual unfolding of events. Thus the meta-theory of science serves as a reference point in the interpretation of human

behaviour, and establishes the distinction between logical conduct and every other kind.

This meta-theory is obviously applicable to the science of economics. Economic theory or rational economics seem to Pareto to be the equivalent of rational mechanics. Pure economics does not reproduce what happens in reality; it rigorously formulates the implications of certain postulates that are laid down in advance and that constitute the market system on the hypothesis of the conformity of behaviour patterns to certain logical rules. Pareto the economist, as has often been said, became a sociologist in order to bridge the gap between the world whose logic has been elaborated by economic theory, and social reality. But, and this seems to me the essential point, Pareto is at pains to bridge this gap without changing the theory. Or, to put it another way, to present a theory of non-logical actions and a theory of general social equilibrium which in their formal structure resemble the theory of economic equilibrium.

How does he do this? By two successive operations: on the one hand, by constructing the abstract variables—residues and derivations and the various sub-classes of residues and derivations—which make it possible to sift out experimental regularities from a mass of facts; on the other hand, by identifying the principal variables whose relations of mutual dependence constitute the general equilibrium of society (comparable, *mutatis mutandis*, to the economic equilibrium). The sociological theory arising from the Paretian meta-theory thus adds up to an apparently systematic whole as a result of two processes: the analysis of non-logical actions with the help of the concepts of residues and derivations, and the reconstruction of a general equilibrium thanks to the mutual dependence of four variables (residues, derivations, social heterogeneity, and interest).

What does the analysis of non-logical actions lead to when applied to politics? What place does the political variable take in the system of general equilibrium? These two questions might also be formulated in these terms: how to give a sociological foundation to the underlying similarities of political beliefs and religious beliefs, between the democratic religion and the Christian religion; and what place to give to the dominant minority in the social totality.

The instrument which Pareto manipulates with great virtuosity—from *Les Systèmes Socialistes* onwards—is the distinction between form and substance, a distinction which, it seems to me, assumes two different characters according to whether it refers to the residue-derivation duality or the duality of the historical regularities and details of events.

LET ME APPLY the form-substance distinction to the critique of political ideologies. The observer will note with irony that there is no underlying difference between "God wills it" and "Democracy demands it." Who can know what God wills? What democracy demands is determined by each individual in accordance with his definition of democracy, a definition which may claim from human societies what they cannot give. Take another example, similar to the previous one, but whose implications are more easily apparent. What is the difference between "Louis XIV, king by divine right" and "Lenin (or Stalin), the representative of the proletariat"? None. We can all *understand* the writings or sayings of those who exercise supreme power. Whether they derive from Bossuet or Marx is immaterial: the fact is power, legitimate power. The principle or the formula of legitimacy may change but none of them is scientifically more or less valid than the other: they are all inaccessible to logico-experimental thought, which is alone susceptible of proof; and thus they all belong to the category of non-logic.

Men probably do not believe in democracy or progress in the same way as they once believed in God or the devil. We no longer witness trials of animals and witches. But the public spontaneously hit upon the term "witch-hunt" to describe McCarthyism or the Moscow Trials, as if the ordinary man felt instinctively the affinity between these phenomena so widely separated in time and space. Where does the affinity lie? Not, surely, in the words or the arguments used but in what might be called the "substance" and, in the particular case, the "sentiment" or perhaps the tendency—the sentiment that a maleficent power is embodied in such and such an individual, the tendency to seek in a confused reality or in an abstract entity (Imperialism instead of the Devil) the origin of the ills which afflict a society.

I HAVE JUST ADOPTED a mode of illustration typical of the Paretian style. There is indeed something in common between the fear of witches and the fear of un-American activities or the fear of traitors to Marxist-Leninism. How far is it a similarity or identity of substance? There seems no doubt that men used to believe in witches. Is there merely a difference in form between this and the obsession with traitors in the Soviet Union and the United States?

Let me go back to a Paretian example, that of the principle of legitimacy. No formula of legitimacy lends itself to logico-experimental proof. But with or without proof, both rulers and ruled contrive to justify their power or their obedience. The transition from one justification

to another affects only the form. What does the form mean in this case? The conscious thought, the vocabulary, the conceptual system as opposed to the sentiments. It must be admitted that the choice of the words "form" and "substance" is not exactly a happy one. What seems to me to be fundamental is that Pareto seeks and finds "constants" at the level of the sentiments, beyond what lends itself to a comprehensive interpretation inherent in the language itself.

Let me take a religious example: "What is called remorse is a manifestation of the idea of alteration of integrity" (paragraph 1241), and in the following paragraph:

"Everyone, of course, believes his own morality to be the true morality, his own religion the true religion. The Moslem laughs at the Catholic's qualms about eating meat on Friday and the Catholic laughs at the Moslem's remorse after touching a pig with the hem of his garment. The atheist teetotaller laughs at them both, though he cannot forgive himself for drinking a little wine."

ONE HAS ONLY TO TRANSLATE a passage of this kind into the vocabulary of today to discover what might be called the philosophico-methodological postulates of modern sociology. It is the "interiorisation" by the individual of the system of values or imperatives characteristic of a society or a religion, the denial of any distinction of principle between the interiorised convictions of one or the other, between religious convictions and moral convictions. In the last analysis, Weber and Durkheim operate no differently. If they are less shocking it is because they express themselves in a different style, whereas Pareto is at pains to shock his rationalist reader (*tu quoque*) and, while emphasising that non-logic is not illogic, constantly pointing out the violations of logic committed by all believers.

Let me take another example which may be even more offensive to our sensibilities. A taint affecting an individual or a group must be expunged. Whether it is expunged by material means (water or fire) or by moral means (confession, penitence) is neither here nor there: they are merely two aspects of the same procedure. Here is a passage from Pareto's paragraph 1247:

"Among many ancient peoples material and moral taints whether resulting from voluntary or from involuntary acts, were regarded as identical. Uncleanliness or crime, deliberate homicide or accidental homicide, the impurity of the woman who gives birth, or the impurity of the man accused of some malefaction—all leave a similar taint. The material taint may not arise from real uncleanliness but from imaginary uncleanliness. The taint contracted by an individual may extend, by contact or otherwise, to other persons, things, abstractions."

The modalities of taints and purifications are innumerable (variability of forms). The senti-

ments relating to the integrity of the individual and his appurtenances, under variable forms, represent the substance or constant element of the phenomenon. To put it in different terms, there is no society without prejudices, and one man's prejudices are another man's superstitions, and *vice versa*.

IT IS APPARENT that Pareto belonged to the same generation as Durkheim and Weber. He is no less a sociologist than they if the fundamental postulate of all sociology consists precisely in acknowledging the socialisation of men by their background, the existence in each of them of prejudices, or beliefs, or affirmations of values which cement society by giving it the minimum of coherence without which no social system could exist.

Pareto's "sociologism"—if by *sociologisme* we mean the social changing, arbitrary character of men's ways of thinking and acting—has nevertheless a different ring from that of Durkheim or Weber. The critique of religion, characteristic of the age of the Enlightenment, opened the way to reason. The Paretian critique of religions or ideologies merely opens the way to a science which confirms the permanence of religions and their non-rationality. Moreover Pareto, by his tone of voice, seems to hold up to ridicule the very beliefs whose social utility he recognises; and he tends to underline the social utility of the beliefs that are most opposed to the spirit of the time. Finally, on the assumption of a permanent structure of society, he exposes all the political Utopianisms which will inevitably achieve results that are radically different from the objectives at which they aimed. No such bitter vision can be found in the *sociologisme* of Durkheim or even of Max Weber.

Mass & Élite

THE SECOND PHASE of the theory of general equilibrium to account for the development of modern societies utilises not so much the notion of the residue itself (as opposed to the derivations) as the classification of residues and in particular the contrast between the residues of Class I (the instinct of combinations) and Class II (the persistence of aggregates). The relative proportion of Class I and Class II residues in the mass and the élite constitutes the "substance" as opposed to the "form", a phenomenon which is to be observed in various periods of history although in other aspects ancient societies differ greatly from modern.

The theoretical formulation comprises mutual

dependence rather than any unilateral causality; and the primary importance of what Pareto calls social heterogeneity, the inevitable conflict between the Minority of power or wealth and the Many. The societies in which he lived gave him the main subject-matter for his historical vision. Those such as the democrats, who rely on guile alone to keep their power, finally succumb. New élites (for example, the syndicalists) capable of the vigour necessary for governing any society will inevitably arise if the bourgeoisie abandons itself to humanitarian daydreams, if the speculators continue to enrich themselves at the expense of the *rentiers*, etc. The theory which Pareto arrives at—a theory in the sense of a general conception of society and its movements—seems to me to revolve round the distinction between Mass and Élite, in other words the political sub-system rather than any other sub-system.

LET US BE CLEAR, HOWEVER, in what a limited sense the conception of the Élite and the Mass characterises the Paretian interpretation of global society. Pareto observes throughout history the permanence (the "substance") of the separation between a privileged minority and the multitude. The constant phenomenon—the power of the few—rests on diverse foundations, sometimes military force, sometimes wealth. Thus the most general proposition, valid for all societies, does not relate to the infra-structure or to the determination of the social entity by the relations of production. The most general proposition affirms heterogeneity or inequality as the constant, eternal feature of any social system.

The circulation of élites, without possessing any causal primacy (which would be in contradiction with the notion of mutual dependence) nevertheless appears, in the last part of the *Treatise*, as the most striking aspect of the general movement of society. Pareto, although an economist by origin, ends up with a political vision of the general development of societies. He does not seem to recognise a difference in kind between ancient and modern societies, by reason of the enormous disparity between their respective productive capacities. In other words, not only does the Élite-Mass cleavage constitute the substance of the social entity, but the succession of one élite by another (in accordance with the relative frequency of Class I and Class II residues in the élite and in the mass) characterises the cycles of mutual dependence, the fluctuations of global society.

In consequence, Pareto's social dynamic (to borrow an expression of Auguste Comte's) is tantamount to a pessimistic and cyclical philosophy of history. Whereas Marx, on his own

admission, had borrowed the idea of the class struggle from the French historians but rooted it in an economic interpretation of society in order to open up the prospect of a peacefully reconciled society, Pareto takes up the Marxian idea of the class struggle and interprets it in political terms, thus closing all doors towards a classless society.

I should be going beyond my terms of reference if I turned from analysis to criticism. I shall confine myself to enumerating a few points which may provide points of departure for future discussion.

1. The residues appear at first like scientific objects—like linguistic roots—not like real forces. The transition from one notion to another seems to me to manifest itself by the almost exclusive use of the distinction between the first two classes when Pareto comes to study the development of global society. It is as though the “instinct of combinations” and the “persistence of aggregates” represented the two major tendencies which determine the behaviour pattern of social man; the relative frequency of residues arising from Class I or Class II becomes the equivalent of the relevant strength of each tendency. In this roundabout way Pareto gets back to the old idea of the two socio-psychological types which Machiavelli more charmingly christened Foxes and Lions.

2. By what method does Pareto arrive at determining the relative frequency of residues of one or the other class in a given social group? I must confess that on this point the Paretian methodology seems to me arbitrary. True, he sees the necessity to gather evidence, to observe symptoms and behaviour patterns, before inferring characteristics or states of mind. But he proceeds unsystematically, borrowing his examples and illustrations from a variety of sources of unequal value.

3. The critique of political ideologies or religious beliefs—or, if you like, the scientific explanation of these ideas or these beliefs—discloses constant or relatively constant residues through the diversity of appearances, ritual or intellectual. This sort of explanation aims to establish residues which Pareto regards as characteristic of social man in spite of the diversity of societies. It is as though the sociologist regarded his task as essentially completed as soon as he had reduced a multiplicity of actions to the unity of a sentiment (or of a few residues). Inevitably Pareto discards what interests the historian, that is to say the characteristics peculiar to such-and-such a practice or such-and-such a belief. He also discards the more or less structured unity of each system of action and thought. He deliberately ignores the conscious logic of social organisation. The only logic he is

willing to recognise, beyond non-logical phenomena, is that of the sentiments.

4. The logic of the sentiments—or the theory whereby the sociologist makes customs, habits, and manners intelligible by tracing them back to the sentiments which determined them—involves a dual meaning. If one goes back to the various customs relating to the dead, to the sentiment (or supposed residue) “the repugnance which the dead inspire”, to what extent has one “explained” it? Or has one merely assumed a certain sentiment suggested by the practices observed? Does the hypothesis of the persistence of certain residues in itself offer an explanation? Is it the classification of the residues that counts?

The fact that Pareto, in the last part of the *Treatise*, confines himself almost exclusively to the first two classes seems to me to prove that in the interpretation of history, he does not go appreciably beyond the ideas which he expressed in *Les Systèmes Socialistes* or in the first chapter of the *Manuel d'Economie Politique* (1906). In these earlier works he uses the expression “family of sentiments”, the meaning of which is illustrated in a passage from *Les Systèmes Socialistes*. Pareto is discussing a remark of Alexis de Tocqueville's on the subject of irreligion on the eve of the French Revolution, and he writes:

“The degree of the oscillation of religious sentiments in general was much smaller than that which was observable in one particular form of these sentiments, that is to say the Christian religion. . . . Today, in 1901, we are again in a period when the intensity of religious sentiment is rising. This recrudescence has benefited the ancient religions only to a small extent; a new religion, socialism and other humanitarian beliefs of a similar nature, spiritualism, etc., have reaped most of the benefit.”

The high proportion of Class II residues seems to me to express, in esoteric language, the notion of the intensity of religious sentiment or (more generally) conservative, familial, patriotic sentiments.

THE EXPLANATION of social practices and their diversity in terms of more or less constant residues suggests another thought: that these sentiments alone make possible any social order whatsoever. If individuals acted selfishly, without regard for others or for the collectivity, if they did not feel a deep and apparently spontaneous attachment for their groups and their beliefs, peaceful co-existence and the social order itself would become impossible. Residues and derivations not only account for non-logical actions, they reveal a sort of biological logic without which collectivities would dissolve. Traces of Social Darwinism are discernible in the *Treatise*: history condemns humanitarian utopias which

are incompatible with the harsh imperatives of survival.

5. A final question. Does one detect in Pareto an almost unconscious assimilation of the constant, the general, the "substance", with the essential? If it is true, then, that all societies divide themselves into an Élite and the Mass, do the modalities of this division resemble each other to the point where the general theory of equilibrium teaches us the major characteristics of all societies?

THE AVOWED AIM of Pareto's political and sociological theories is truth, not utility. They claim to be scientific and not a mere guide to action. They preach no explicit doctrine; they offer no advice; they do not distinguish good from evil. The interest of the collectivity, as opposed to an interest *in* the collectivity, does not lend itself to rational determination. Pareto also (although in a totally different style) suggests the incompatibility of human values. Perhaps civilisation, understood as the progress of intelligence, leads through the spirit of criticism and individualism to the dissolution of the powerful sentiments which cement societies. So he himself does not choose, and cannot choose, between the diverse lessons which the reader can draw from the treatise.

What different interpretations is the *Treatise* open to? I shall suggest four: the fascist or Darwinian interpretation; the Machiavellian or authoritarian interpretation; the liberal Machiavellian interpretation; and the sceptical or cynical interpretation (with or without a suppressed moral attitude).

1. Between the two World Wars Pareto (whatever his personal attitude towards fascism may have been) appeared to many among us who were anti-fascists as a theorist, if not of fascism, then of some of the ideas from which fascism drew sustenance. Let us recall briefly some of the themes of fascist ideology. The democracies are in reality demo-plutocracies: Members of Parliament and political party leaders occupy the front of the political stage but others, bankers and industrialists, manipulate them. Humanitarian ideologies conceal the same struggle for power, the same domination of the many by the few, as any other ideology; but these humanitarian ideologies, by comparison with others, have the major defect of undermining the cohesion of the social body, and weakening its defences. Only one further step is needed to christen Pareto the "Marx of the bourgeoisie" (a soubriquet which was also applied to Max Weber).

Pareto never ceases to contrast the weakness and the humanitarian scruples of intellectuals, parliamentarians and judges with the vigour, the

combateness of the syndicalist leaders and certain socialists (*i.e.* not Social Democrats but genuinely revolutionary socialists). By this sort of consideration he seems to be inviting the bourgeoisie to show as much forcefulness as its enemies. More than once he suggests that an élite can only justify itself by its capacity to command and to obtain obedience. (The minority in the demo-plutocracies suffers from an excess of Class I residues and a lack of Class II residues, *i.e.* from too great a reluctance to use force.)

In the historical context of the inter-War period, such language irresistibly called to mind that of the revolutionaries of the Right. True, a reader of the *Treatise* might logically have drawn from it a conclusion favourable to the revolutionaries of the Left, justified by the virile qualities of which they gave evidence. Georges Sorel, who passed the same sort of judgment as Pareto himself on humanitarian socialism, wrote an apologia for Lenin before he died. Pareto did not do so, and it was inconceivable that he should; for Pareto denied any hope of a classless society and in doing so unmasked the ideologies (especially the revolutionary utopia) of the Left. Moreover, unlike Sorel, who also unmasked and at the same time validated myths, he condemned the economic plans of the left-wing revolutionaries since he saw in the advent of socialism the inevitable advance of bureaucracy.

The fascist interpretation of the *Treatise* overlooks certain aspects of Paretian thought, though it is consistent with the tone and style of part of the work. At the very least it can be said that Pareto chose for his sarcasm the same targets as the Fascists.

2. The Machiavellian interpretation, a milder version of the preceding one, justifies the same themes or arguments, sometimes by affirming their "truth", sometimes by suggesting their "utility."

The democracies are indeed plutocracies; and it is true that "any living creature which shrinks from giving blow for blow and spilling its adversary's blood automatically puts itself at the mercy of that adversary." It is true that "if the Negroes were stronger than the Europeans, it would be the Negroes who divided up Europe among them and not the Europeans who divided up Africa." Furthermore, it is right that the leaders of the bourgeoisie should show as much vigour as those of the proletariat since justice, or what passes for justice in our societies, more often results from a balance of forces than from the discretionary power of one man or one group.

Thus the Machiavellian interpretation would integrate the appeal to bourgeois force into a radically different complex from that of the fascists. Class conflict, a plurality of forces, the

limitation of state power—all these ideas emerge automatically from the theory of general equilibrium. This theory effectively precludes the utopia of a classless society, but it also precludes the utopia of a State at once just and total. It shows the probable consequence of an élite which has lost a sense of the struggle for life; it also shows the probable consequence of an élite which stifles free discussion and scientific research.

The Marx of the bourgeoisie? Perhaps; but, unlike the Marx of the proletariat, with a view to a free society and not a revolution degenerating into despotism.

3. The liberal interpretation represents a somewhat more idealistic version of the Machiavellian. It stresses the possible implications of the theory of general equilibrium. The general equilibrium of society does not add up to an ideal, an ultimate end, a perfect society; the movements of history represent so many fluctuations around positions which never remain stable.

But Pareto, in spite of his apparent cynicism, pins his hopes of a gradual improvement in the social system on scientific knowledge. He does not deny the progress, however painfully slow, of logico-experimental thought. He thus sets a value, perhaps the highest value, on intellectual freedom. What could be more opposed to fascism and all totalitarian movements than the rejection of utopia, of absolute power, and the regimentation of minds? To limit the powers of a strong state, capable of deciding everything—is this not the best way to preserve the rights of the individual?

4. The sceptical or cynical interpretation, probably the closest to the psychological truth, discerns in Pareto above everything else a mixture of moral indignation and contempt—an indignation prompted not so much by injustice as by hypocrisy, a contempt not so much for men themselves as for their illusions. Whom is he thinking of? The few who refused to listen to the purveyors of opiates, who are prepared to live with their eyes open in a world that is alternately odious or ridiculous. Pareto once declared that he would not have written the *Treatise* if he thought that his work would be widely read. But,

on the basis of his own theory, he should not have been afraid of a wide readership, since science has never shaken convictions based on sentiment rather than reasoning.

DID MACHIAVELLI DELIBERATELY choose the role of *auteur maudit*? I do not know, but I should be inclined to answer in the negative. Pareto probably did, at least in so far as he was a sociologist. Do the attitudes towards Pareto in our day, half-a-century after his death, suggest that passions have cooled and that his thought has found its true place in the intellectual treasury of Western culture? To tell the truth, I think not. Pareto the sociologist⁵ still has his adversaries and his supporters, who are equally resolute, not to say fanatical. He cannot be said to be innocent of any of the interpretations which I have briefly outlined; he suggested them all, including the one which some of us fought so passionately forty years ago.

What is he guilty of, you may ask? I shall answer in a word: he is guilty of having simulated innocence, of having given free rein to his passions under the guise of simple objectivity. Even when it is written in a scientific style, a political theory always contains within itself a more or less partisan doctrine. Written in a style of mordant polemic and bitter irony, Pareto's political theory inevitably becomes a weapon of war in certain historical conjunctures: that is to say, when those for whom he reserves his harshest blows are under attack from adversaries who share his pessimism and are ready to listen to his appeals to force but not to recognise the value of scientific truth.

By its content, Pareto's political theory might have given the friends of liberty a lesson in vigilance. By its manner, it runs the risk of encouraging the men of violence. Pareto, too, was the victim of an illusion. To achieve neutrality, it is not enough simply to invoke the logico-experimental method understood in simplistic terms. Political or historical reality is not susceptible of a single interpretation, any more than there exists a single interpretation of the *Treatise*. The author of the *Treatise* will never enjoy a unanimous and untroubled recognition on this earth—nor indeed would this solitary, combative, pessimistic but passionate aristocrat have wished to.

⁵ *Sociological writings*. By VILFREDO PARETO. Edited by S.E. FINER. Basil Blackwell (1966, n.e. 1976), £7.50, paper £3.00.

Kaleem Omar

At the Dam

The spotted deer burst into the clearing,
the hot proximity of the tiger overcoming its fear
of us and the articulated dumpers
we were using to divert the river,
burst across the ground the jungle had been cut from
through months of rain, months of an isolation
we had worked ourselves into. I was closest to the edge,
and looked up in astonishment
to see the brown doe leap
a stack of bricks drying in the sun
and with a jump that seemed to defy gravity
land in a heap on the roof
of a temporary hut of explosives.
No one saw the tiger, but we could sense
it was there. The deer's trembling was proof.

I jumped off the dumper and ran to watch
what the other men heading for the deer would do.
They talked amongst themselves of how funny it looked
up on the roof—the funniest thing they had seen.
Did anyone have a camera, someone shouted.
They wanted a picture,
a group photograph of themselves and the deer.
Something they could send to their wives and children.
After the photographs had been taken,
one of the men casually picked up a brick
and flung it at the deer, hitting it on the side of the head.
More bricks, thrown by other men, followed;
and before I could run back to my dumper,
the deer was dead.

Some men from a northern tribe, whose history
was full of brave deeds against their enemies,
took the carcass down from the roof,
carried it back to the camp kitchen,
slit its throat, watched it bleed a little,
scraped the guts out, smashed the bones
so they wouldn't stick out at an awkward angle,
cut off the head and hooves, skinned it,
dumped the rest into a large earthen pot,
where it cooked slowly, not looking
much like a deer,
until it was ready to be taken out,
carved into wholesome portions, garnished, eaten.
The men who hadn't got a share
asked how it tasted. Was it as good
as it looked? Was it cooked to the right degree
of tenderness? Should it have been roasted instead,
turning slowly, on a spit, in the steamy air?

That night I drove the dumper to the river's edge,
pressed the accelerator to the floorboard
with a notched mahogany stick,
jumped off and waited for the machine to slide
down the slope into the water.
As I watched it vanish,
I was thinking of what I would tell them
the next morning when they asked what had happened.
It was an accident, I would say.
My foot slipped on the pedal as I was backing up a load
and before I knew it the edge had given way.
There. That's where it went down.
You can see the marks.
It was instinct that saved me. Pure instinct that I'm alive.
I threw a chipped piece of brick
into the water, and another
before the first could sound.

Gavin Ewart

The Gods of the Copybook Headings

Though you use Old Testament phrases, as Biblical as could be,
When you're pushing up the daisies you will certainly agree
That even the Best get forgotten (we're an absent-minded lot),
The Good Tree with the Rotten, if they're not there on the spot.

You can write like a Cockney soldier an' show yer bleedin' 'eart—
When your bones are growing mouldier than they ever were at the start
They'll be asking "Who was Atkins?" with a blank and mystified stare,
There'll be daffodils and catkins, in a Spring when you're not there.

You can write the Great Short Stories, on the sentimental side,
With the politics pleasing to Tories, and lament how the loved ones died.
You can fill them with genuine feeling (and dialect), all your skill
Won't make them much more appealing to Time, as he moves on still.

Remember it has been written how *Those to whom Evil is done*
Do Evil; and, Once Bitten, when your life had scarcely begun,
You could develop a Trauma and turn into a Bully yourself—
Not the Latter or the Former will stay long on the library shelf.

The Gods of the Copybook Headings treat even Good Writers with scorn,
They don't reckon much with our weddings and how many children were born.
They are Anglo-Saxon and clannish; like their Copybooks, dated too.
They, too, in the end will vanish—and so, I'm afraid, will you.

In May 1976, forty years after Kipling's death, a class of thirteen adult British
"O" Level English Language students had never heard of Kipling, nor had they
heard of any of his books (even the children's books), though one student thought
he might have written poems. Another asked if he was anything to do with
Mr Kipling's Cakes.—*Author's Note.*

NOTES & TOPICS

European Notebook

By François Bondy

Bed-time Story

Zurich



I HAPPENED TO be in Washington at the time, but had no more to do with it than that. In spring 1967 an attractive, red-haired 24-year-old Harvard student of lively intelligence was told that she had been selected to

take part in the programme "Young Staff in the White House." A number of young Americans would become "Special Assistants" and so watch the President and members of his cabinet at work from close quarters. President Lyndon Johnson had made the acquaintance of this new "Fellow of the White House" at an evening ball and had danced with her. Doris Kearns was then active in the anti-Viet Nam protest movement. She had just written an article (and the President knew this) entitled "How We Can Get Rid of Johnson in 1968."

When I met this high-spirited young lady in Washington last year she had already (at thirty-two) become a "full Professor" in Harvard on the strength of her book-length study of Lyndon Johnson. Until shortly before his death Johnson spent many hours with Doris Kearns both by day and night; sometimes he would arrive before dawn, lie down in her bed, pull the blanket up to his chin and talk while Doris sat and took notes. She was also a "resident" of the Texas ranch to which Johnson withdrew after refusing a second nomination. Since there have recently been so many revelations about "affairs" from Franklin D. Roosevelt to John F. Kennedy, it should be added that Miss Kearns was Johnson's Boswell—or perhaps to avoid the *lit. crit.* confusion, his "Eckermann"—and that even

the gossip columnists have never whispered about "improprieties."

LYNDON JOHNSON TALKED about his youth, his mother, his dreams, his successes and his disillusionments. His listener was fascinated by the President's candour and energy (and also his honesty in his fight for civil rights for coloured people). Johnson, thinking of history, wanted to leave some testimony behind him to show what he "really" was. His sharp-eyed partner, thinking of historiography, spied the outlines of a book combining intimate details with political interpretation. Publishers were alerted and offered huge advance royalties. Doris had meanwhile taken up with a philosophising "speech-writer" for Democratic Presidents and, to Harvard's consternation, revealed that her book was their combined work. Somehow her co-author (Richard Goodwin) was dropped, and what has now appeared is presumably her own account.

But her own historical account of what? Is she quite clear in her own mind that Lyndon Johnson might never "really" have let himself go? Couldn't it be that he was always calculating what to say to her and what its effect would be? Nevertheless the enormous vitality of the late President comes through, as does his sense of failure and his bitterness.

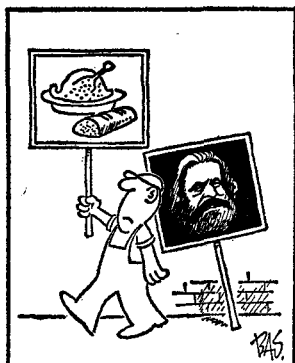
Compared to the latest biographies of Jack Kennedy which concentrate on long-concealed histories of illness or to the *romans à clefs* with which Agnew and Ehrlichman have taken their revenge on Nixon, Miss Kearns' bedside manner is impressive. The bedroom might well be a more suitable place for primary-source research than the doctor's office or even the Oval Room.

IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY published for the presidential candidacy Jimmy Carter announced his discovery that "Presidents too are human beings." He refers to himself in the book's title, "Why Not the Best?", and a report about him in a somewhat hostile newspaper was furiously attacked by his staff (and friendly magazines such as *Time*), for the "Best" always take more trouble about their "image" than the facts. What price intimate reportage? Friendly or hostile, it succeeds at best in getting tantalisingly close to the bedside. The truth may still be under cover. Presidents and candidates, however closely observed, remain riddles, not least to themselves.

That greatest of American Presidents, Abraham Lincoln, was in the estimate of Karl Marx only "*eine Durchschnittsnatur von gutem Willen* (an average character of good will)." Which suggests that not even the vaunted dialectic manages to get under the skin, or the bed-sheets, of history.

Scapegoats

Berlin



POLAND is a "People's Democracy." It may have certain difficulties with the workers, the farmers, and the intellectuals. But otherwise it undoubtedly represents the people.

Six years ago Poland experienced a prolonged,

bloody and, within obvious historic limits, successful workers' revolt such as had never been seen before in the Eastern Bloc. I recall the following joke which went the rounds in Warsaw at the time. Napoleon, Czar Nicholas II and Lenin were watching events in Gdynia from paradise (or elsewhere). Lenin enthused: "What a proletariat—militant, full of solidarity—flinching before no sacrifice as it mounts the barricades—what a prospect for socialism!" Czar Nicholas was enthusiastic too: "These policemen, how sturdily and purposefully they go into action without any fake sentimental tentativeness. With police like that Russia today would still be a Czarist empire!" Napoleon too was overjoyed: "This Polish press! Had I had such a press, the French today would still not know who lost the Battle of Waterloo! . . ."

BUT THINGS AS THEY HAPPENED were not quite so amusing. Gomulka, the rebel of 1956 who had degenerated into the most ossified Communist functionary, fell as a result of the revolt. On other occasions when things were going badly in Poland, a call had gone out for the "*voivods* of Silesia", the most progressive of the provinces. So it was in this case. The man was Gierek; and at the end of June he was faced, like his predecessor, with similar strikes and disturbances; but he gave way to the demands, quickly and flexibly. The cause of the trouble was the sudden rises in food prices—and they were cancelled. After such a concession—which the grievous economic situation did not in fact permit—repression inevitably followed. Exemplary sentences were pronounced against "vandals" and "hooligans" in closed courts (although in 1955 foreign reporters were allowed to be present at the trial of workers in Poznan). In the factories, without a word being said, "ring-leaders" were laid off work for three months without pay. It looked more like a general attempt to

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eliminate the opposition than a precise punishment of "anti-social elements." *Polytika* publicly laid the blame on "lack of political consciousness among the workers." I couldn't help being reminded of Bertholt Brecht's sarcastic advice to Ulbricht in 1953 that one could, after all, simply dissolve the people and elect another.

Poland's workers tend to take literally the talk about the "Workers State"—and therefore demanded free elections of trade-union officials (which Gierek promised them in 1971 but had not granted). The peasants are not collectivised, and it has been known for them to feed state-subsidised bread to their cattle since it is cheaper than the grain which they deliver to the mills. Increased purchasing power resulting from massive wage increases since 1971 has gone almost entirely on foodstuffs owing to lack of other goods for sale. Both productivity in the factories and deliveries by the farmers fell simultaneously. At the same time Poland must export meat to cope with her indebtedness.

THE INTELLECTUALS are proving equally tiresome. Many of the most reputable scientists and artists, including some in senior positions, protested against a change in the constitution. In this case protest against the renewed show trials ranged from young Kuron (a sort of Eastern Cohn-Bendit) to Lipinski, the famous economist. The Catholic Church is both restive and influential. But with so many stresses and strains, Poland's Politburo needs more "agents", "spies", and associated ring-leaders to explain away its failures. Now that "imperialist America" and "revanchist Germany" have ceased to be "cold war enemies", even these are no longer readily available. Pity the poor Five-Year-Plan that even has a shortage of scapegoats.

Yet Another Exile?

Amsterdam



subjected to arrest, labour camp, banishment, psychiatric wards, compulsory exile or, at the

ASK ANY observer of the Soviet intellectual scene to come up with, say, 20 names which he associates with some Russian book or other. He will in all probability think at once of at least 15 who have been

very least, muzzling or vilification without right of reply. Among the remaining five there would certainly be two or three names of writers whose works have admittedly been published but who have never held office or been asked for their opinion by the monolithic Writers Union, a closed shop which can at a stroke stop a writer's career cold.

I often hear the argument that, for the moment, just too much emphasis is being laid in the West on the critics of the régime, on the "dissidents." If this is so their prominence over here would be the expression not so much of genuine intellectual interest or literary merit as of a more or less manipulated process of propagandised distortion. Let us not exclude this supposition even if it makes us uncomfortable. But in any case there are certain figures—e.g. Boris Pasternak, Anna Akhmatova, or Solzhenitsyn, who are regarded as "important" by Russian intellectuals of all shades of opinion. I have talked to enough of them to know that the treatment meted out to these authors, both yesterday and today, remains distressing. This applies to the poet Josip Brodsky, still a young man, who has been forced to emigrate against his will; one day Russian literary historians will register with astonishment that, before being handed an unwanted visa for "emigration to Israel", he was condemned as "a parasite" by a court and banished from Leningrad.

One of the youngest and best known of the exiled dissidents, representative of a broad spectrum of opinion—including "the right to pay homage to no ideology at all"—is the 37-year-old Andrey Amalrik who has now emigrated to Holland. Eleven years ago he was sentenced to hard labour and banished; he was sentenced again after writing an account entitled *Involuntary Journey to Siberia* and a small book *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* (I learned from him recently [see ENCOUNTER, October] that his great-great-grandfather was an immigrant from southern France, and his great-grandfather founded a factory still in existence today.) All sorts of tricks have been played on him including arrest on the street without warrant and for several months emigration was "proposed" to him. The authorities were so anxious for Amalrik to emigrate that, when he protested, they agreed to remission of the high rate of duty applicable to personal works of art taken out of the country.

The difference between Andrey Amalrik and many other famous dissidents is that he did not substitute some cult of The People for faith in The Party. He merely doubted whether a majority of Soviet citizens were yearning for democracy or could even visualise anything other than a

rigid authoritarian state. There was no mysticism or mystification here; the author himself has since criticised his own use of the provocative "1984" in his book title. He hopes that certain definite "new tendencies" will emerge in Russia but he fears certain other ones; although he has much to say to us, he regards himself (as I have already reported here) as someone who must study and reflect further.

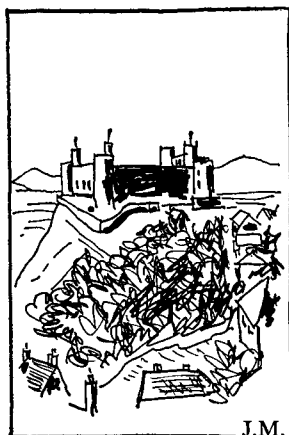
Has he been overplayed by the West? A few years ago the influential German news-weekly *Der Spiegel* published certain slanderous and spiteful rumours about him. Amalrik then

replied to the editor that he hoped to be freer, even in prison, than "your countrymen, and mine, who freely shouted Hurrah for Stalin and Hitler! . . ." Amalrik is neither religious nor nationalistic nor Marxist. He is less inclined than many other dissidents to try and associate a new Russia with some period of the national past. In his controversial essay he published his Moscow address, and he refused to have anything to do with anything conspiratorial. Why in the world should the fact that he has now "voluntarily" changed his abode affect the interest of what he has to tell us?

Letter from Aberystwyth

Crash Course

On Learning Welsh—By JAN MORRIS



OF ONE THING he was sure, said a wise man to Henry II in a beloved Welsh anecdote. On the day of the great reckoning the Welsh would answer the Most High Judge in nothing but their own tongue—the Old Language, the *hen iaith* that remains for so many Welshmen the profoundest object of their

loyalties, their Golden Stool, their Grail. The Most High Judge, awaiting without much enthusiasm, I fear, the judgment day, must sometimes wonder whether the sage erred, for the Welsh language has been in a state of decline for a century and more, and not long ago seemed quite likely to die out altogether. Well under half the Welsh now speak it, and only in the heartland of north and inner Wales is it the everyday language of the majority.

But during the past ten years or so something striking has been happening. History, economics, politics and social change have combined to fire an astonishing revival of interest in the language, and the same verve that once blazed through Welsh evangelical religion is now directed hardly less passionately into the service of *yr hen iaith*. A myriad organisations, from cells of village enthusiasts to university departments, are trying

urgently to stem the tide, and a specific form of Welsh, *Cymraeg Byw*, "Living Welsh", has been evolved to catalyse the several forms and dialects that complicate the passage of the language into modern times and so make it easier to learn.

All over Wales the activists are at work. There are night schools, weekend seminars, learners' magazines, conversational tapes. You can spend an instructive holiday with the Daughters of the Dawn. You can arrange to be telephoned weekly by Welsh-speaking ladies. You can attend an "Ulpan", one of the intensive study courses based on Israeli methods of teaching Hebrew to immigrants. Most famously of all, perhaps, you can go to the annual Aberystwyth crash course, directed, if that is not too flaccid a verb, by one of the most furious prophets of the Welsh renaissance, Dan L. James.

HAVING DECIDED TO BUILD the rest of my life around the possession of Wales, finding myself like many another patriot incomplete without a proper knowledge of the language, planning as the summit of my aspirations a grand work of imagination about the country, I went to Aberystwyth recently to submit myself to this *Cwrs Carlam Cymraeg*. We were tested at the start for our mastery of the language, and I found myself half-way up an elementary scale of accomplishment: but it was hypothetical really, for so intense did the experience prove, so burning was the zeal of our instructors, that in no time at all I found myself to be as passive and receptive as a baby. It was more than a language course. It was a reversion to beginnings, or a new start.

We were a mixed lot, the 65 or so of us who, in perceptible grades of apprehension, were assembled there for indoctrination. There were medievalists from American universities, to whom it was professionally necessary to read Iolo Goch or Gruffudd Gryg in the original. There were Gaelic scholars from Ireland, who tootled on flutes at lunch-time and played jigs on tape recorders up the stairs. There were morose businessmen or bureaucrats, urged to these desperate measures by the devolutionary times. There was a Celtic scholar from Switzerland, and a woman gliding champion, and one true enthusiast who told me his basic reason for coming was his delight in verbal mutations (he had come to the right place—Welsh consonants are subject to 18 different metamorphoses).

And there were the people like me, people who were cherishing our roots, and hoping at the same time to sow some seeds of our own in Wales. If we were the most devoted pupils, we were the most vulnerable too, for in us the energy of intent was often tempered by self-reproach. We should have done this, we nearly all said, long ago. The distinguished Anglo-Welsh poet looked back wistfully to his boyhood in the Rhymney valley. The Aberhonddu lady wondered if she had left it too late. The minister from Llandidloes hoped he could establish a new rapport with his Welsh-speaking congregation. The Cambridge geographer, remembering his student days in Aberystwyth, could not help admitting advantages to the Cambridge way of life (he is a Fellow of his college), but knuckled down manfully to his irregular verbs. We were like parents learning from their own children, being strangely mutated ourselves into other fields of consciousness.

OUR TUTORS, on the other hand, were men without doubts. They were unequivocal people. They seemed to believe unquestioningly not just in the need to save and distribute the language, but in the unrivalled good fortune of being Welsh at all. They relished every nuance of Welshness, every joke, every familiar song, every snatch of the old poetry, every great name. If you want to know what it is to be like to be aflame with the absolute certainty of your loyalties, go to Aberystwyth and watch the staff of the *Cwrs Carlam*. A Quaker librarian came one day to give us a lecture, and somebody asked him how he liked life in Aber, after working in universities in Llundain (London), Caerlyr (Leicester) and Rhyduchen (ford of the oxen). It was, he said (almost blasphemously I thought for a man of his persuasion), Heaven itself.

This utterness they translated into a violent method of instruction. It was not of course

violent physically, and was certainly not unkind, but it was dedicated to the ramming of Welsh into our beings by sheer momentum. The tutor of our class was a grammarian, Alun Charles of Caerphilly, who seemed to me a teacher of genius—the best teacher I have ever been taught anything by. Of uncertain or perhaps variable age, owing to gregarious habits, he bestrode the narrow stage of our classroom like a highly theatrical Colossus—a performer, a zealot, and a true lover of the language. He seemed to suffer from sinus trouble, and his expositions were punctuated by powerfully suggestive sniffs: also by the clicking of fingers like castanets, the hitching up of trousers, the acting of many parts, exaggerated expressions of sympathy or dismay, enormous laughter, wry references to last night's goings-on at the Llew Du (Black Lion to you, and to it too for that matter), or exchanges of pith with the gliding champion.

Though one of his gifts was an instant empathy, so that he sensed at once when a brain was blurred or enervated, still throughout the course I remained terrified of each day's opening session with this remarkable man. It was like the breaking of a nightmare for me, for I have long dreamt of situations in which, faced with an expectant symphony orchestra or a Broadway audience, I have altogether forgotten how to dance or conduct. Each morning of the *Cwrs Carlam* I felt this ordeal approaching, and each morning, to prepare for it, I went for a brisk walk along the Aberystwyth promenade, hoping to catch from its jolly ambiance, the smiles of its early morning saunterers and municipal employees, some needed *hwyl* of my own.

IT NEVER WORKED, and Alun Charles's opening drills will haunt me always. There are in the Welsh language almost innumerable ways of saying "Yes", and every single one of them is wrong outside its own context. The *Cwrs Carlam* method of starting the day's work was to hurl at us out of the blue, and to no pattern, a staccato series of Welsh epithets, each demanding its own particular affirmative. I have seldom seen so many pale faces as there were each morning in Room 123 as this diurnal exercise began, and with clicking thumbs and eager frown Mr Charles hurled his demands around the room—*Fyddan nhw'n barod? Byddan... Gweithio mae e? Ie... Hoffech chi hufen ia? Hoffwn... Ganodd hi yn Gymraeg? Do... Ydyh chi'n hapus? Ydw... Roedd e yn y Llew Du? Oedd....*—until, collapsing half in nervous debility, half in laughter, we sank back in our chairs for the day's attention to prepositional declensions.

AS WE PROGRESSED, nine to five each day and homework in the evening, I found myself becoming more, rather than less, malleable in the hands of our instructors, and began to feel towards them some of the paradoxical fellow-feeling we are told prisoners feel towards their interrogators. It was all for our own good. Exhausted as we all became—the *Cwrs Carlam* is very hard work—we somehow hungered for more, and came to welcome that morning barrage as a return to the familiarity of the torture room.

This was partly because we were theoretically supposed to speak nothing but Welsh. *Dim Saesneg!* rang out the instruction as we shambled away to lunch each day, and if we did not always obey the rule still the English part of each pupil's brain was slightly atrophied, like an anaesthetised gum. This was a peculiar feeling, for since our Welsh was inadequate for any subtleties of intercourse, we conversed in a state of social impotence. We resembled patients in a geriatric ward. It was like having a stroke, I thought—the first time for 25 years when I did not feel in complete control of my own situation.

In short we were being, in the most benevolent way, brain-washed. Into our mental vacuums our tutors were injecting not merely *Cymraeg*, the Welsh language, but elements of *Cymreigrwydd*, Welshness, too. You can hardly turn an Illinois graduate student into a Welshwoman in a couple of weeks, but still all of us, aliens or indigenes, were being subjected to a strong dose of Welsh pride. We spoke not of Cardiff, of course, but of Caerdydd; we read not *The Times*, but *Y Cymro*; if we were told a story, it was a story of Welsh achievement, the story of William Price, who made cremation legal, or Sir Ifan ap Owen Edwards the founder of the Welsh youth movement—"and to whom do we owe all this? To *Syr Ifan!*"

In the evening too we were often invited to attend a *noson llawen*, a "merry evening." These communal festivities are one aspect of Welsh culture for which I have always felt myself inadequately equipped, but even so it was with a distinct sense of guilt that I used to sneak out when we got around once more to *Sospan Fach*, or began the competition between classes to produce the Daftest Rhyme in Welsh. I seemed to myself not merely ungrateful, but actually traitorous. The songs were sung with such zest, Dan James himself presided with such ebullience, that as the echo of the choruses pursued me down the hill to Llanbadarn, I felt almost like a defector creeping away between the frontier posts.

We were anything but refugees, on the other hand, when as our tutors urged us we set about practising our new idioms in the Aberystwyth pubs and cafes. Then we were more like agents

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Tortillas for the Gods

A Symbolic Analysis of Zinacanteco Rituals

Evon Z. Vogt

After 18 years of field work in Chiapas, living with and studying the Indians of Zinacantan, the author speaks authoritatively about the concepts of this contemporary Mayan community. He reveals the colour and complexity of each religious ceremony, whether it is designed to bless a new home or firmly "fix" the innate soul in an infant, to honour the saints, or renew the year. The messages of these complex rituals, partly aboriginal, partly derived from Spanish Catholicism, are interpreted in this work: a system of symbols and meanings, they communicate the very essence of the Zinacanteco way of life. £11.25

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of the régime. There is a kind of English spoken by Russians which I often remembered during these excursions. It is a very flat, competent, almost electronic kind of English, which seems to have been implanted in its speakers by computers, having no human origin or imperfection. Something like that I think, is the effect of *Cymru Byw*. Because it is intended to be equally intelligible all over Wales, in its pristine condition it lacks quirk, dent or ellision, and is as far removed from the thunderous splendours of the great Welsh orators as a high-rise block, say, from St Pancras Station.

MANY WELSH-SPEAKING WELSHMEN sneer at this bland newcomer among the dialects. This is sometimes because they feel grammatically unsure of themselves, and sometimes because they resent the idea of Welsh actually being *learnt* at all. I met a horrid man from Swansea on the prom one day who seemed positively affronted by the notion, and suggested that while Welsh might perhaps be learnt on The Planet Mars—always given its full title in Wales—it certainly could not be down here on earth. Generally, though, since true Welshmen welcome any interest in their language, they sniff at *Cymru Byw* simply because it lacks character, and with this reservation, as a somewhat ornate practitioner in English, I felt a certain sympathy.

It was as Mars-children then, *Cymru SF*, that we made our excursions into the real world downtown, carefully formulating our requests for ice-cream, or trying to respond to the bonhomies of the *Llew Du*. I generally froze into an excruciating incoherence in general company, especially if Dan L. James was anywhere about, but many of my colleagues were less inhibited, and often above the slurred babel of the townsfolk one could hear the confident *Cymru Byw* of the gliding champion. I greatly admired her poise, but thought that if she had at that moment arrived in her glider from The Planet Mars, she could hardly have seemed more extraneous.

BUT THEN I WAS SUFFERING from a particular cultural neurosis. I am Anglo-Welsh, and have benefited always from the pleasures of that condition—having Wales always as a treasure at the back of one's mind, while feeling the whole world to be one's homeland. While I believe in Wales as a microcosm rather than an absolute, and while I consider individualism in nations, as in people, enjoyable only if it is generous and receptive, still to decide as I have done, in my middle years, that Wales will henceforth be the true epicentre of my life, is in some sense a renunciation. It implies a closer focus, a change of scale.

There were times during the *Cwrs Carlam*, especially times of tiredness and so of self-pity, when I momentarily felt a poignancy to the decision, piquantly exemplified by my presence, so nervous but so keen, at my table in Room 123. I rebelled against it sometimes, and sometimes, looking at myself from the outside to so speak, I saw myself irrevocably drifting, afloat upon a sea of mutations, away into the Celtic mist. There is a shop in Aberystwyth which offers a splendid collection of Welsh books, records, and tapes. At any other time I would love the place, but one day in our second week, browsing among its collection, I was suddenly overcome by the narrowness of its speciality, its absolute concentration upon the affairs of one small country on the edge of Europe.

Walking discomfited into the street, I saw at once, in the window of a bank, a Canaletto print of Venice, a pageantry of style, grandeur and authority beside the celestial Basin of St Mark. *Ah Venezia, Venezia, non ti lascio più!* It was only after an even more than usually brisk walk along the promenade (kicking the rail at the far end, as is the student custom) that I recovered my aplomb.

BUT THEY NEVER LASTED LONG, these effete disturbances. Wales is not in fact a narrow country at all—small countries seldom are. The truest aspiration of Welsh patriotism is membership of the nations, not withdrawal, and xenophobia is a rare emotion among the Welsh. Aberystwyth itself is full of foreigners, thoughtfully eating cod and chips at Ernie's, or colourfully gathering in saris and bandanas for courses in librarianship, and the genuine interest of Welsh people in the lives and manners of other nations is one of the delights of the place.

Indeed it was largely this native freshness, this lack of sour or prejudice, that had compelled me back into Welshness, and so brought me to the *Cwrs Carlam*. For reasons more arcane than explainable, the Welsh style coheres to the Welsh language. So powerful and attractive is this mystique, in a generally disagreeable period of history, that more Welsh people each year are giving their children a purely Welsh upbringing, and if I had my time again I would do it for my own family too, so enviable is the stability and contentment that comes from this positive acceptance of heritage. I hate the word nationalism, despise the idea of chauvinism, and have seen often enough the debasement of patriotism: but this innocent Welsh love of a country and its traditions seems to me beautiful, and to be coveted.

So if I occasionally felt trapped within my own



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resolution, I was soon confirmed in it again. I took a Volkswagen bus to Aberystwyth, and had arranged to sleep in it in the garden of a friend, all among the trees overlooking the exquisite valley that runs away towards Ponterwydd and Llangurig. There at the end of the day I would retire to lick my wounds and practise my verb changes, and there I would be restored in the consolation of a true Welsh home. My hostess is one of the great talkers of the world in any language, and she would ramble on exuberantly through the evening, sometimes testing my Welsh, more often falling headlong into English, full of the Welsh fun, and the Welsh kindness, that I most admire in *Cymreigrwydd*, until dusk had fallen over Commins Coch, the rabbits were playing all over Millie's lawn, and it was time for me to climb into my bunk and rehearse my idioms (*Mor ddu a bol buwch*—dark as a cow's stomach: *cyn wired â'r pader*—true as the Lord's Prayer).

THE GLIDING CHAMPION was also an accomplished potter, and she had made some souvenir mugs, elegantly inscribed with the words CWRs CARLAM ABERYSTWYTH. I shall cherish mine always, for I was much moved by the experience of it all. On the last day of the course we moved from class to class, to exchange conversation with strangers, and I suddenly found myself gratifyingly fluent in *Cymru Byw*. This was a happy revelation. It was like a sudden shaft of sunlight, to encourage my endeavours and illuminate my hopes, and it gave me a slightly heroic, or epic, sensation.

For there was something splendid to our purpose there. I laughed at the *Cwr's Carlam* sometimes, but I recognised nevertheless the power of its conception, and the nobility of its meaning. To save from extinction an ancient

tongue, to revive the pride of an ancient people, to unite those who are alienated and recall those who have apostasised—to cherish into the modern world the sense of identity, brotherhood, and natural affinity that survives almost uniquely in Wales—these are magnificent intentions, and help to raise Wales herself, in my view, out of the provincial into the universal.

THERE WAS A farewell *Noson Llawen* in the room above the dining hall. I made a brave attempt at this, having shirked both the course *eisteddfod* the night before, and the inter-class sporting contest that afternoon, but my nerve failed me when we started on one of the action songs, as it failed me always in childhood when I thought the circus clown might single me out for attention; and breathing my excuses to the minister from Llanidloes, and avoiding the blazing eye of Dan L. James, in the full glory of his performance, I made my way once more down to the beach.

It was a glorious evening, and far across Cardigan Bay (or rather Bae Ceredigion, I suppose), humped like so many islands in the sea, I could see the hilly ridge of my own home, the Llyn peninsula, running away from Snowdonia into the western sea. I stood there ecstatic, amazed as Welsh people often are by the beauty of their own homeland, and out of the water, whence voices come in all the best Welsh legends, I heard with gratitude and affection a new faerie incantation: *Fwytwch chi fanana? Bwyta... Ddylen nhw ddechrau? Dylen... Fwynheuoeh chi'r Cwr's Carlam? Do... Cymru am byth! Ie...*

WELL I SHALL BE all right, I thought, so long as the Most High Judge doesn't start on the negatives.

The Guilty Innocent

Drifting out, out to metaphor,
While each knocked-down innocent
Is rebuilt in white stone.

Out to shock each pun,
Every poem has become
A home for drifting metaphors.

I have slipped out from the black earth
Into watery sunshine;
Each seriousness has become a flower.

T. F. Griffin

BOOKS & WRITERS

Tragic Wallenstein

Golo Mann's Great Biography—By C. V. WEDGWOOD

HERE AT LAST is a biography of Wallenstein¹ which combines scholarly precision with psychological insight and is also a work of literature. Golo Mann's long-expected book surpasses the highest expectations.

The biographer of Wallenstein faces a formidable task. This millionaire landowner from Bohemia, financing and commanding his own army, all but achieved total victory for the Habsburg Emperor in the Thirty Years War. His reserved character, his ambition and his power made him the object of rumour and speculation in his lifetime and left him a prey to the denunciations of his enemies and the inventions of contemporary journalists after his death. Later, in the romantic era, the drama of his rise and the enigma of his fall, culminating in the midnight murder at Eger, fascinated poets, dramatists and historians, though perhaps only the genius of Schiller added something memorable to the Wallenstein legend. Historians of the later 19th century attributed to him ideas about the unity of greater Germany or—conversely—the freedom and autonomy of Bohemia which belonged rather to their own period than to his.

The historian who takes it upon himself to cut through the forest of legend and the thick undergrowth of controversy must, in so far as it is humanly possible, clear his mind of preconceived ideas and be studious to avoid reading into the sources either more or less than the original writer intended. Wallenstein was very much a man of his own time in his conflicting loyalties and his material ambitions; he is therefore to be approached with a clear and balanced knowledge of the world in which he lived. His biographer must also have limitless patience and know a great many languages, because the sources—official and unofficial, personal and political, diplomatic, military, administrative and financial (with a handful of astrological material for good

measure)—run to thousands and are written in almost all the languages of Western and Central Europe.

Golo Mann controls this gigantic material with masterly ease. He can pin-point a significant detail while never losing sight of the massive subsidiary evidence; his interpretations are always built on a solid structure of fact, and he never forgets the changing material pressures and the unforeseen accidents which deflect the day-to-day course of history. There is no speculative theorising, but a firm hold on the concrete realities of every situation.

THE SO-CALLED MYSTERY of Wallenstein's end, his efforts to establish a bond between himself and his army that would have made him independent of the Emperor, his failure to do so and the precipitate flight which ended in his assassination by some of his own officers (Irish and Scots) has been for years a subject of controversy. What lay behind it? Did he think he could make peace in Germany in despite of the Emperor? Did he hope for a kingdom for himself in Bohemia? Were his approaches to the other side—the Swedes, the French and the Saxons—the work of an idealist seeking peace or of an adventurer playing for his own hand? What was it all about?

Golo Mann makes quite clear what it was all about. Carefully sifting the evidence for the last months of Wallenstein's life, he finds that the once dominating *generalissimo* was sick in mind and body and had lost his once-keen judgment and his grip on the realities of the political situation. During those last critical months at his headquarters at Pilsen in the winter of 1633–4 he was only dimly aware of the intrigues with the Emperor's enemies which were carried on in his name by ambitious underlings—his brother-in-law Count Trcka and the self-made general (once his devoted creature) Christian Ilow. The fate of these men was bound up with his. They fled with him when their schemes failed, and

¹ *Wallenstein: His Life Narrated.* By GOLO MANN. Translated by CHARLES KESSLER. André Deutsch, £10.50.

were murdered with him on the same night at Eger. But Wallenstein had also confided until it was too late in the calculating Ottavio Piccolomini, who appeared to go along with him while undermining his credit with the army and systematically betraying him to the Emperor. (Piccolomini did not join in the flight, was not murdered at Eger, and lived to become, in course of time, the imperial commander-in-chief.) Wallenstein in those last months was a helpless, broken man, exploited by stupidly ambitious associates (one cannot call them friends) and cynically betrayed by the only one among his senior officers who had a gift for *realpolitik*.

Suddenly he found that the Emperor had denounced him, that his army at Pilsen would not support him, that his commander in Prague had declared against him. So he fled towards the Swedish and Saxon forces, thinking, if he was still capable of thought, that some of his troops might still follow him, and at nightfall he was received by apparently obedient officers at Eger, who killed him before morning. There was nothing idealistic, noble, or even politically intelligent here on either side. It was the inevitable outcome of Wallenstein's mental and physical collapse.

Golo Mann's lucidly analysed and vividly written account of the final catastrophe carries total conviction.

BUT THIS IS the end. The greater part of Professor Mann's book is devoted to the emergence and career of Wallenstein, and the state of the Habsburg Empire and Bohemia in particular, which made his career possible. He builds up his picture of the man and his background from an impressive accumulation of small facts, pieces of evidence like the fragments

of a mosaic gradually fitted together to create the total picture.

The son of a lesser nobleman, a Protestant, Wallenstein was left an orphan at an early age. At the university of Altdorf he was in trouble for violent brawling, but had sobered down before he completed his education by travelling in Italy and serving in a campaign against the Turk. Returning to Bohemia, he became a Catholic, like many of his contemporaries, as much out of calculation as conviction. Next he laid the foundation of his fortunes by marrying the richest heiress in Moravia. She was a widow and she pre-deceased him, but she was neither old nor ugly as later rumours pretended.

In the Bohemian revolt of 1618 he remained loyal to the Habsburg ruler and contrived by a skilful *coup* to get away to Vienna with a wagon-load of much needed cash for the hard-pressed Emperor. After the defeat of the rebels in the following year he was rewarded with grants of confiscated land, including Friedland in northern Bohemia from which he would later take his ducal title. Rich now, both through his marriage and his new estates, he exploited the upheaval in Bohemia by buying other forfeited estates cheap and selling dear. Yet even in the abnormal conditions of the time the astounding growth of his fortune between 1621 and 1623 remains something of a mystery.

Certainly one element in his enrichment was his efficient management of his property. Everywhere he developed the resources of his estates, encouraged agriculture and where possible stimulated industry. His letters to his various stewards reveal his memory for the smallest details, and we find the future *generalissimo* narrowly enquiring after the milk-yield of his cows.

By 1623 his wealth and credit enabled him to raise, equip, and maintain an army for the Emperor. He now showed himself to have considerable strategic gifts. Within five years he had carried imperial conquest to the shores of the Baltic, spreading alarm and despondency among the Protestant states of northern Europe, and provoking considerable disquiet among the Catholic German princes, especially the Duke of Bavaria, who saw that the Emperor would no longer be so conveniently dependent on their support as he had previously been. The Emperor, for his part, was ever more deeply in Wallenstein's debt. He rewarded him with the Duchy of Mecklenburg, confiscated from a defeated Protestant prince. The petty Bohemian nobleman was now one of the greatest men in Europe—or seemed to be so.

BUT HIS RESOURCES were overstrained. His principal banker and creditor, Hans de Witte,



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went bankrupt and committed suicide. Maximilian of Bavaria, the ablest and most powerful of the Catholic German princes, organised an opposition party strong enough to compel the Emperor to dismiss the upstart general.

A year later Wallenstein was re-called. Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, alarmed at the imperial advance towards the Baltic, and subsidised by the equally alarmed government of France, had landed in Germany and was carrying all before him. In this extremity the Emperor turned again to Wallenstein. But the general was no longer what he had been. His fortune, as well as his health, was in decline. The Swedes had overrun Mecklenburg; even his Bohemian lands were in danger. When, in November 1632, he confronted the Swedish King at Lützen, near Leipzig, he failed to gain the decisive victory on which he had counted, and even the death of Gustavus in the battle altered the situation much less than was expected.

His indecision after the battle lost him the confidence of the Emperor, who was beginning to look to Spain for the financial and military help he needed. There followed Wallenstein's attempts (or those of his henchmen) to bargain with the French, the Swedes and the Saxons; his repudiation by the Emperor and his murder.

ONE CAUSE OF HIS FALL lay in his character. An egoist, consumed with ambition, he had no gift for human relationships. His cold reserve, the iron mask he had learnt as a young man to impose on a naturally nervous and explosive temperament, repelled friendship. Wary and calculating in business, he seems to have lacked the most elementary human wisdom in the subtler field of politics. Sometimes he was lucky, as with the Emperor's chief minister Eggenberg, who became his friend. He was lucky too, after his second marriage, in the sound advice of his father-in-law Count Harrach, also a friend of the Emperor; but Harrach's death in 1632 robbed him of a reliable adviser when he most needed one. He had, in the end, too many enemies, and he had neglected to take the most elementary precautions against them. It is almost beyond belief that, in the last six years of his life, he made no attempt to see or speak personally with the Emperor. How could he—how could any man—in such circumstances hope to retain the personal confidence and trust of the man on whom, in the last resort, his position and career depended?

Now and again his actions hint at a touch of human warmth. When his troops occupied Goldberg he sent special orders that his old schoolmaster who lived there was not to be

molested. In the midst of his massive responsibilities on campaign he could remember to see that a small debt was paid to a dependent far off on one of his estates. But such actions are perhaps only evidence of his meticulous attention to detail and his sense of what he owed to his own position. There may have been no more human feeling in them than in his instructions to a contractor to sort all boots into pairs before delivering them to the army, or his order to his steward about the planting of a consignment of saplings in one of his parks.

When the banker Hans de Witte killed himself, Wallenstein showed no flicker of sympathy for a man who had long been a devoted and indispensable colleague. When the steward of one of his estates, after more than twenty years of service, lost his head and fled in terror before the advancing Swedish army, Wallenstein was implacable in his wrath. He did his duty by those who did theirs by him; he had no use for failures.

In one respect the popular stories about him were true; even rumour could not exaggerate the splendour and extravagance of his way of life. As Duke of Friedland he was surrounded by a household of 899 people; a squadron of counts and barons served him in the higher offices about his person; on journeys he was followed by at least 1,000 horses, while daily deliveries to his suite included "two fat oxen, twenty sheep, four calves, a tun of butter, eight barrels of beer, two casks of Rhine wine, four casks of Franconian wine" and very much more. The great man himself was temperate and content to dine off "half a young pheasant with artichokes, followed by a dish of strawberries and washed down with two silver goblets of light ale."

His personal expenses, distinct from the expenditure on his army, ran to 1½ million talers a year. What a contrast to the pitiful revenues of the younger sons of German princes. . . . Small wonder that envy, hatred, and mistrust poisoned the atmosphere in which he moved. But this ostentatious extravagance was a characteristic of his time. The self-made statesman of the 17th century regarded splendour and pomp as necessary status symbols. The prodigal building operations of Cardinal Richelieu surpassed even those of Wallenstein; and how many great houses were built—or left unfinished—by Strafford, the luckless minister of Charles I?

WALLENSTEIN'S OBSESSION with architectural grandeur has, in the end, a kind of pathos. He spent a little time, at least, between campaigns at the great palaces he built in Prague and at Gitschin; he may even have got some pleasure from them, if he was capable of pleasure. But his gigantic building schemes for Gustrow, his capital in

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Mecklenburg, were overtaken by events long before they could be realised. And then, his fantastic project for a baroque palace in the Italian manner at Sagan: the houses of seventy citizens were torn down to make room for it, and it was to be surrounded by gardens, avenues, fountains, and a menagerie. The work went ahead, but Wallenstein spent only nine days in this unfinished Paradise, and those divided between three flying visits. *Vanitas, vanitatum*. . .

Was it the search for an identity, in the modern phrase, which drove him on in this ceaseless building—the urge to find a sense of security, to gain through visible grandeur that confidence in himself which the exercise of power apparently never gave him? Golo Mann here draws an illuminating parallel between the self-made Wallenstein and his greatest rival, Maximilian of Bavaria:

Power is his profession and, the more so as he chose it and none else, his pleasure, much as it is that of his one real rival in the realm, Maximilian of Bavaria. The latter though, serves the Holy Virgin and the greatness of his ancient ramified House and the Empire too. He serves purposes extant long

before and long after him. He stands on firm ground. Wallenstein does not. He is a stranger everywhere. He is only invested with power which he has himself created, but with which he is not durably identified nor it with him.

This, then, could have been the psychological flaw which brought him to disaster.

AS AN HISTORIAN who has worked for many years in the 17th century I am aware that much more could be said in praise of this great book. It is the most comprehensive and illuminating life of Wallenstein that we are ever likely to have, conceived creatively, as a work of art, as all good history is, and based on deep research as all good history must be. Golo Mann writes a highly personal style, in this case (as he explains in his Introduction) faintly coloured with 17th-century turns of phrase. Charles Kessler is to be congratulated on a translation which unobtrusively captures the occasional archaic echoes and never loses the compelling narrative vigour of the original.

I Am A Tape Recorder

“Oral History”—By GEORGE EWART EVANS

IT HAS BEEN CLAIMED that “the coming of the tape recorder promises to revolutionise the historian’s task more profoundly than the camera has done.”¹ In fact, historians in the mass have been rather slow to exploit photographic illustrations to extend their sources or bolster their findings; and they are likely to be even slower in taking to this new technique of recording oral evidence on magnetic tape if it is practised with the uncritical enthusiasm that many of its adherents have recently given to it. It is possible, however, to take oral evidence from people for use as a historical source without using a tape recorder. This has been done many times in the past, and Henry Mayhew’s work is as good an example as any. It is only during the last fifteen years or so in Britain that the tape recorder has been generally available. It was the BBC that developed one of the first portable units in the early Fifties. This was the so-called Midget (EMI, L2), a very fine machine for recording speech if not so useful for music. But some of those who used it complained that it was called a midget

because it wasn’t; and if we compare it with the size and compactness of present-day units the complaint appears to be justified.

I came to using the midget rather late (1956), but by this time I had already been using oral sources freely, chiefly in the writing of a book which attempted to illustrate, just at the point of profound changes, the deep historical roots that were in a rural community. I also wrote a second, similar book using oral sources, taking notes while conversing with an informant, going home and writing them up immediately, and brooding over them during the following day at odd moments, filling in the words and phrases that came back, until I was able to write up a fairly full account of the conversation.

In a sense, I was fortunate that I did not have use of a tape recorder at this period. The slow process of note taking, of later writing up the notes in full, of frequently returning to the old shepherd—my first informant—to check up on a word or a historical technique in farming, compelled me to think about what I was trying to do. At first I was not completely convinced that I was justified in pointing to oral sources as

¹ *Times Literary Supplement*, 11 August 1976, p. 693.

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direct historical evidence, so deeply had I been conditioned, like most people who had been through the academic mill, into thinking that for historical purposes you should use only that evidence that had achieved the canon of print or unimpeachable manuscript. But as I became immersed in the history of the community through manuscripts, books, and daily converse with the people, the deeper became my understanding of it; and the more sure I was that the men and women I was talking to were really survivors of a long historical sequence, much longer than their own lifetime. I became convinced that they were true historical documents as trustworthy when they were describing their own work and their life in the village as any written document or printed work—more so in many instances, for the reason that they could recount local usages and variations with accuracy and with the additional background colour that was usually missing from the conventional historical document.

This hard-won conviction over a longish period when I was serving my apprenticeship made me realise that the tape recorder was by no means an absolutely essential element in the process of finding and recording what were in fact new historical documents. Looking back, I find that I regarded the tape recorder when I came to it more as a refinement of a technique I had already been using: it changed the actual work of recording, made the task easier in one sense, and the end result—if the interview was managed properly—was a more convincing document. Most important of all, it gave the document a potentially extra dimension (I shall return to this later). But in spite of all its advantages, it was easy to recognise that the tape recorder was not going to make the job of assembling and interpreting the evidence one whit the less difficult. Even less than the computer can the tape recorder write your history for you.

My early experiences and doubts bore another fruit: it made me sympathise with those historians who raised pure hands in horror at the thought of equating oral evidence with that written or printed on paper, or parchment. This new technique went right against their grain, their training and their instinct. They had spent many years perfecting the accepted historical techniques, and they were loath to engage in learning—perhaps laboriously—an entirely new one. And I knew from my own experience that they would not be fully convinced until they went out into the field to get actual experience of the exercise that would enable them to assess its worth for themselves. As it was, their reaction was natural, and it appeared to take two forms: they either side-stepped any discussion of the new technique

with a superior smile, or they raised muniment- or library-based theoretical objections as though to discredit the new technique in its infancy. One example of this kind of objection occurs in the March issue of *ENCOUNTER*, where E. P. Hennock, in discussing recent work in this field under the title “Untidy Reality”, postulates an absolute distinction between “a sense of the past” and “a sense of history.” Now a sense of the past is a phrase few will quarrel about, but a sense of history immediately raises the questions: whose history? or what history? To risk a personal example: if I myself had been obsessed by the strong sense of history as it existed about thirty years ago, I should never have escaped from its rigid encasing, and it would still be hanging about my neck like a millstone. But there is not one history, as a unified, usable abstraction, even as practised in the universities. The discipline is an amalgam of partial “histories”: one school, one movement, one man even, sees history with a sense or a vision that is different from another’s, and thanks be to Clio for that. It makes for greater variety. But it also has a negative side: one school, one man, sees *his* history as the one true gospel; and this makes for the intolerance that many university historians seem to be particularly prone to. It will be no gain if in their debates they become infected with the sociologists’ practice of bandying doubtful and unnecessary abstractions that do not stand up to close analysis. The only cure for this is a vigorous and well-timed slashing with Occam’s Razor. But while doubtful or superfluous abstractions continue to stand in and fill the lacunae left by the dearth of experience-based ideas, both in Ph.D theses and in learned articles, the cure is likely to take a long time.

Where I agree with the objections of many of the conventional historians is in their condemnation of the use, or abuse, of the tape recorder to get what can only be called “instant history”—historical facts taken from an older generation with little historical underpinning from other sources, little attempt being made to relate these facts to the historical context of the informants, to their place in the development of a community in time and its continuity with a long past. This kind of history goes back only as far as the beginning of the century, roughly to the beginning of the *break* that heralded modern technology and mass organisation.

MY OWN VIEW is that the technique, as it was developed in Britain and Ireland, of taking oral evidence and using it as material for history has been adversely affected by the movement that came from the USA a few years ago.

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Along with an unsatisfactory, even misleading name for the exercise—oral history—there came an entirely uncritical enthusiasm for the use of the tape recorder. The movement had spread like wildfire in America, and it has undoubtedly salvaged a vast amount of valuable memories and experiences that will be gold to the historians of the future. It must be said, though, that much of it is not history, as its title wrongly implies, but for the most part the raw material for history—history *in posse* and not *in esse*. The same objection can be made, moreover, to a great many of the studies that have since been published in Britain, including much of my own work which has latterly gone out uneasily under a false banner. Many of these recently published studies border on sociology, accounts of the present without too much concern being given to those *roots* of the present that extend far deeper than the 70 or 80 years they usually cover.

The technique of using oral tradition and of recording oral sources has been practised in Britain and Ireland for at least half a century: and this indigenous movement is much nearer to the spirit and the demands of conventional

history than the pattern that has been imported from the USA. The movement here had its origin in the recognition as long ago as the early '20s—at first, by a few individuals with vision—that the older and remoter communities in these islands are remnants of a long past whose culture (language, methods of winning a living from soil or sea, of building their homes and keeping their cattle) offers valuable historical evidence for helping us to construct the pattern of our early history. This movement began in the Celtic countries and later took root in the north of England. Most of the work was done under the banner of Folk Life or Folk Lore but few historians have been ready to admit it into their highly fortified preserve. The oral tradition, even when it is sponsored by ancient documents, strict scholarship, and copious links with the material culture, which make cross-checks possible, is still regarded as suspect; and its passport is rarely franked without some grimace or audible grumble or other. In spite of this the folk life pioneers have demonstrated, without their meeting any convincing counter-argument, that oral sources expertly chosen from the appropriate

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environment are bearers of a tradition that extends back for centuries. Its collectors recognise that to know the history of their field of study in depth is an essential qualification for their work; and they have shown that no one who taps oral sources, even today after the break of this century, is sufficiently equipped to collect the evidence unless he knows not only the history that is in the books and manuscripts but the history that is visible in the community itself. Whatever, therefore, historians think of the oral tradition and its collectors, their method of amassing oral sources out of nothing less than a complete familiarity with the historical background of their informants' environment is surely the pattern to be followed.

The practice of the folk life collectors, as they have developed it professionally over a couple of generations, deserves close attention for another reason. The study of language and dialects has been one of their main concerns, and it has been essential for them to get as perfect a recording on magnetic tape of both speech and music as they can, using the best and most up-to-date equipment available. But the standard of recording outside these centres, here in Britain (and I suspect in the USA), is lamentably low. Many beginners who have elected to record "oral history" in this country openly avow that they are not interested in the technical quality of the recordings they make: as long as they can understand them sufficiently well to make a transcript, that is all they need. The recording itself is expendable, and the tape is "wiped." They assume that the transcript is the only desirable product of an interview. But this is a disastrous view. Apart from the possible errors that can creep into the making of the transcript of a tape, the transcript itself is at best but a pale copy of the original recording. The tape itself gives an extra dimension to the material collected: the informant comes alive, and the listener is able to a certain extent to form an intuitional estimate of his character and his sincerity, in addition to judging the content of what he is saying. The tape, therefore, is the primary document; and it is more than probable that the historians of the future will prefer to listen to a good quality, easily comprehensible recording rather than read a comparatively "flat" and possibly imperfect transcript. For the historian of language, the linguist or dialectologist, a tape recording of the highest quality will be a first requisite.

An impatience to rush into print, along with the assumption that the collecting of oral evidence is an easy option—painless history—has given rise to a crop of books that could not conceivably be classified as history at all, and in one or two instances not even as the material



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for history. The reviewers of these books in the newspapers and the periodicals are partly to blame, for the reason that they tend to assume that any book whose author has recruited the help of the tape recorder is by its very nature "oral history." This has become a more or less general assumption.

THESE THOUGHTS have arisen out of a reading of one of the latest books that largely consists of transcripts of recordings from magnetic tape; and I apologise to the author, Melvyn Bragg,² and to the reader, for the circuitous approach to it, and especially for the autobiographical intrusion. In this, my motive was not simply to take my own ego for a walk but to clear the ground in the most concise way possible for my attempting to assess his book. This long approach has also been necessary because at least one reviewer of this book has classified it as oral history; and many of the reviews I have read also appear to give the reader the impression by their comparisons and cross-references that it falls into this category. But the author nowhere in his book claims that it was his intention to write oral history. He is writing about his home town, Wigton, situated near Carlisle and the Scottish border; he says quite clearly that he is not concerned with the local history of the town as such, and thereby forfeits any claim he might make for writing its history as opposed to a collecting of material for a history. But even though he states this in the text he seems to have had second thoughts, and has included in an appendix a bare schema of the town's history. This is by no means the same thing as collecting and illustrating the deeper historical continuity that is always available from oral sources, especially in a rural environment such as the one of which Wigton is the centre. Were it his aim to concentrate on the town's history, Mr Bragg's book could well fall under the strictures of those historians who have commented that for sociologists who have in recent years published certain regional studies, history seems to begin somewhere at the end of the nineteenth century.

But he states his purpose clearly in his first sentence: he is concerned with the future of his home town and, by extrapolation, with the future of England. He argues that by recording a cross-section of the people of Wigton he enables them to "tell their own history of England from the end of the nineteenth century to the present day", reaching "back in order to go forward." This is a bold enterprise, especially in the light of the

² *Speak for England*. By MELVYN BRAGG. Secker & Warburg, £5.50.

findings of the innumerable local and regional studies that have been made in Britain since the last war. For the most striking outcome of these is the great differences they point to even in small communities within one county; and the historian takes a greater risk than he imagines in making the generalisations that were formerly so popular. Yet it is difficult to place Mr Bragg's book in any category because, as his title suggests and as he states specifically in the text, his purpose is much more ambitious than to write the history of the sociology of his own town. The role he appears to see himself in is one that used to be called a publicist. His stance, if not his stature, is similar to the writers of a half century ago, writers such as H. G. Wells or Norman Angell. Men like these wrote out of closely argued theories and a lifetime of experience about how the country, or even the world, should be run. Melvyn Bragg bases his analysis of the huge technological and social changes of this century, and his hopes and expectations of finding a way out of our present malaise, on a six years' study of his home town. He suggests that the people of Wigton will speak for England. By revealing some of the most sterling facets of the English character they do in fact show the existence of a sound foundation of people "full of human hope, triumphs, courage, stoicism, full of life-giving qualities and life-enriching virtues." But the pattern Mr Bragg has uncovered does not of itself persuade us that it can be assumed for the whole of the country. In any event, even given its wide spread, it is difficult to see how England will move out of the mire unless there is a well-defined programme for mobilising some of the virtues for action.

It seems to me, however, that although the author has fallen short in his high endeavour to clear the way for a new start, he has accomplished something that is perhaps equally worthy of all his effort: he has given us a full and accurate picture of a provincial community at probably the most exciting point of its history. Through his extensive interviewing and sympathetic understanding of the townspeople he has constructed a memorable document of the changes the town went through in this century. He was admirably equipped to do so. His interviews were in no way of the here-today-gone-tomorrow, clinical, mass-observation type: he was among his own people, studying the community from the inside. The result is all the richer and all the more truthful for that. The scope of his interviewing can be judged by some of his chapter headings: The Big House, Between the Wars, Farms and Farming, The Factory, Education, and Religion. But it is the people who stand out boldly from any abstract structure that is built around them. Men like Kenneth Wallace, Richard Lowther and David

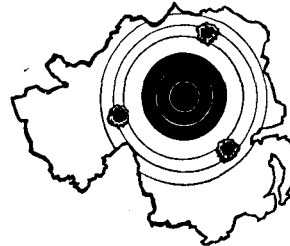
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Pearson, and women like Elizabeth Armstrong, Mr Bragg's grandmother, are given the full prominence they deserve: through long, patient accounts where they speak directly for themselves without, it appears, any more editing than is necessary to make the reading of the transcripts smooth. Moreover, through concentrating on the people themselves—their living, their hopes, and their disappointments—their attitudes to their work and their fellows come out obliquely and therefore more truthfully than could be

obtained by the method of direct, pin-point questioning. He has listened and let his townsfolk talk; and there is no better way of getting to know the real character of a community than this. Even if we cannot logically concede that they speak for a much wider community than their own, they have given their evidence to great purpose; and their clarity, their humanity, and the vigour of their opinion will ensure them a bright chapter when the history of twentieth-century England comes to be written.

The World and His Wife

New Poetry—By DOUGLAS DUNN

ALTHOUGH IT IS intended primarily for A "young readers", *Season Songs*¹ suggests that Ted Hughes might at last be getting back to that rhythmic, sensuous language with which he began. *Crow*, certainly, with the exception of a few pieces, relied on more or less flat statement, on lists and litanies. Since then "Prometheus on his Rock", "Cave Birds" and "Lumb's Remains" had endorsed my suspicion that Hughes was in danger of relying too heavily on "the sequence." As a poetic form, sequences are standard contemporary fare. But from the point of view of form itself they are like Pound's versification, very interesting—there is none. In Hughes's hands, the principle of composition had begun to look ideally suited to what Mr A. Alvarez once called "extremist poetry": the principle appeared to demand a simple, but total, exhaustion of the possibilities generated by one idea.

In retrospect *Crow* no longer seems such hot stuff. There was a split down the middle of reviewers' opinions at the time. Since then the tide has been moving against Hughes almost as much as it has been moving against Larkin. *Season Songs* has elicited a mixture of praise and denial, as might have been expected. In *The Spectator*, for instance, a Mr Nick Totton came out with a caricature of the "unfair review." It proved also to be a masterpiece of deracinated indignation. A strong tang of righteousness gave the unfortunate impression that Mr Totton actually *knows* what is wholesome in life, nature and literature. An overbearing self-confidence which, even as mischief, was far from charming, just managed to hold itself back from claiming

that *his* finely balanced sensibility was a brilliant measure of the superlatively average Englishman.

Attacks upon Hughes's work—and Larkin's—have been peculiarly reliant on piety. The likes of Mr Totton deplore that *Season Songs* is intended for young readers. They do not believe Hughes's interpretation of Nature to be the case. His violent images, they claim, are imported by his mentality, not present in the facts. They seem to detect a grossly pessimistic view of life, itself a caricature of the bleakness imparted by post-war East European poetry. Most of Hughes's critics probably go for these Polish, German, Czech or Yugoslav poets in a big way. They are safe. That is, they are not British. Even Mr Ian Hamilton prints Herbert and Rozewicz in *The New Review*.

But Hughes was in that game before these poets were available in translation. (He also helped make them available.) His climate of bleakness and struggle is enacted in nature, in creatures, weather, phenomena. Now everyone is an expert on nature. It is difficult to allow ourselves to be convinced by reinterpretations on *that* subject. Who does Mr Hughes think he is? Rousseau? Wordsworth? For there is one thing an English poet cannot do, and that is be ambitious. If he is not peculiarly ambitious, but his fidelity to a subject-matter, a view, makes him look like it, then that is just as bad. Get him out of the way, get this Kafka-shit off our hands before he interferes with the programme. Let him read Olson.

As a student of nature, plants and creatures, it was inevitable that Hughes's understanding of humanity should have been embodied in a source of imagery he knew most about. *Crow* was partly a digression from that; myth was given an

¹ *Season Songs*. By TED HUGHES. Faber & Faber, £2.40.

awkward priority over observation, cutting down on the evidence of a mind and imagination immersed in its knowledge and experience. *Season Songs*, intuitively or otherwise, suggests a return to earlier commitments. Times of the year have always affected his imagination. In *The Hawk in the Rain* are "September" and "October Dawn"; and in *Lupercal* "Mayday on Holderness", "February", "Pennines in April" and "November", to mention obvious titles.

IN HIS EARLIER POEMS, Hughes had used rhyme and metres which, if they were seldom more than adequate, did have about them a robustness and sonority that played their part in creating an earthy English atmosphere. It could have been to satisfy the musical expectations children have of poetry that these qualities have been reintroduced in many of his new poems. But the reason for their return is, I hope, less tactful.

His rhythms and diction are seldom those of delicacy and almost always of enforcement. Even his delicacies are sung *basso profundo*. Flights as insubstantial and speedy as those of swifts and swallows are recorded as, in the first case, materialising

*at the tip of a long scream
Of needle. . . And they're gone
On a steep
Controlled scream of skid. . .*

Later this becomes what could be called "strong whimsy"—the strengths of Hughes's characteristic free verse on the one hand, and, perhaps, what he thinks will go down well with young readers—

*Frog-gapers,
Speedway goggles, international mobsters. . .*

Further on still and the exhilaration of his pictures of swifts swells, I believe, into contortion and caricature—

*Their mole-dark labouring,
Their lunatic limber screaming frenzy
And their whirling blades
Sparkle out into blue.*

"Whirling blades" is good; but the line before is a millstone round any swift's neck. The poem as a whole shows how Hughes's powers of observation upon creatures and ideas can veer out of control. The idea—so small a bird, so large its power—is dwelt upon so severely that it puffs up vocabulary. It ceases to be a swift and becomes instead a Hughes-swift. I doubt if you could get away with a description of Concorde on these terms.

Better still, it becomes a swift of the imagination. Many readers, of course, prefer poets to leave natural realities alone; if they must describe them, the process should be entirely on nature's

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terms. Anything else, it is claimed, is disrespectful, pathetically fallacious. Nature, however, only exists when men give it a name and put a value on it. Hughes probably has a different notion of Nature as a life-of-itself in which men and women are admiring observers, exploiters, mere lives. No contemporary poet, however, respects Nature more, its creatures, growths, places and weathers. His accuracies, on the other hand, are all subjective. That is inevitable. There is no one coherent and wholesome philosophy of nature, and no single shared assumption as to its value. The vigour and energy with which he confronts it, so often criticised as unnecessarily violent, denotes *his* confrontation. Inevitably, too, it reflects, at least coincidentally, his understanding of contemporary history and human capacities. Imagination works as it must, never as it ought. Few people seem to believe that. Poets *should* believe it. It allows all kinds of poem; for it allows all kinds of imagination. Imagination, too, the substance of poetry, is amoral, although it does create moral decisions and consumes the social and real as well as generating entirely invented or subjective worlds. It rubs against more considered ideas, obsessions, *idées fixes*, restraints, all sorts of states of mind which slow it down or inhibit its freedom.

Hughes's imagination has never dwelt long on an entirely unambiguous loveliness. There are few sweeteners in his work, few meltings into a soft lyrical mode. But there is sweetness in *Season Songs*—of things changing, the hope for their return, celebration of the natural mystery, celebration of perception itself. A good instance is "The Seven Sorrows"—

*The first sorrow of autumn
Is the slow goodbye
Of the garden who stands so long in the evening—
A brown poppy head,
The stalk of a lily,
And still cannot go.*

THE EMPHATIC, melancholy music of these lines—and there is a good deal more of that in *Season Songs*—is one of the things Michael Longley appears to have given up. In the past he proved himself defter than most in the handling of rhymes and metre. There was a consistently smooth elegance about his work, his intricate verse forms—especially in *No Continuing City*—reflecting an ambitiously precise kind of craftsmanship.

*Man Lying on a Wall*² is no less scrupulous a book. It has already been criticised, insanely, on the grounds that it is too neat, too careful. Elegance

² *Man Lying on a Wall*. By MICHAEL LONGLEY. Gollancz, £2.50.

is no longer the thing-itself for Longley, if, indeed, it ever was. His care is a simple consequence of his honesty. It just so happens his poems unfold in slow, clear, careful lines. They are lines full of experience embodied in flowers and creatures; or of experience told in stories, either whimsical, made-up fictions pressed gently from the imagination, or more direct narratives. His truths and fidelities are among the qualities of contemporary poetry which must infuriate impostors who believe Saussure should revolutionise our native verse.

Longley's new collection—it is his third—presents a poet among his kinsfolk and relatives; on his landscape, which is pieced together by desire and imagination as much as it is real; among his loves, children and affirmations. It is this fullness of view he has consistently worked towards. Domesticity co-exists with the world beyond his house and selves; the affectionate little details of life are seen to be as awe-inspiring as profounder designs, larger intentions.

Long raking sentences, cumulative syntax, work through poem after poem, imitating in their shapes the exploratory desires of a poet who invents as he goes. He seeks to affirm where he can. He makes ordinary endorsements and hallows the world.

*I am on general release now, having
Put myself in the shoes of all husbands,
Dissipated my substance in the parlours
Of an entire generation and annexed
To my territory gardens, allotments
And the desire—even at this late stage—
To go along with the world and his wife.*

Things, real things, slip into Longley's poems and remain there bearing their own re-enhanced properties. There is a robust but sensuous clarity about his new work which, if his poems are singular, eccentric even, keeps them in touch with the world. We are less used to this in contemporary poetry than we think. It may have been one of the disadvantages of Ted Hughes's reputation that poetry has come to be associated in the public mind with the real made extraordinary and the commonplace exotic. (Not Mr Hughes's fault, the public's.) Other more overtly modernist schools of writing have presented extraordinary disjunctions of *style* as opposed to extraordinary interpretations of subjects or observations. As for poetry which intends to be political, Adrian Mitchell has made it so that only extraordinary flights of indignation will suffice to convince a reader or listener a poem might be as political as it is claimed.

These versions of the extraordinary are ignored by Longley. Instead, and like other poets of his generation, he knows well enough that the imagination has its own extraordinary potentials:

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there is no need to light a cigarette with a flame-thrower when a simple match will do. Many poets seem to want to prove the poeticity of their expressions as they write, turning their language, and their idea of what a poem is, as far away from what, first of all, they think prose to be, and, second, as far as they possibly can from what the reader expects. Originality has been equated with deliberate attempts to innovate. Talent, truth, fidelity and scrupulousness no longer enter into many poets' minds, let alone those of critics. Longley relaxes in the assurance that, to write a poem, you must be honest towards feeling and object, to language and cadences which embody them in words and create a singular truth.

JON SILKIN'S³ WRITING grows thicker and thicker. His expressions have come to rely on an extraordinary diction. They wear signs of the dictionary; or, if not that, then of too painstaking an effort to employ full powers of language—by that, I mean the painstaking is as conspicuous as the resources to which it is directed. Too often, his richer idiom expels anything so simple as direct poetic utterance. There is an appearance of the "thought-out", rather than of imagination and mind responding to phenomena or occasions. These lines from "Entropy at Hartburn" are a fair example—

*The huge energies untwine, and stars
slither away on the braids. The wagging stems
of sex slather to inane fruitfulness.*

Here, sound of words evokes as much as their meaning. As in his previous collection, *The Principle of Water*, Silkin has taken his interest in enacting word-sounds a step further. But by now the result, I feel, is too heavy; the unfortunate result is portentousness as much as music. Some lines, I fear, have to be taken on faith, extraordinary perceptions like these, for instance—

*Prophecy is an ear coiling on entropy
Huge elisions pass
through the eye-rimmed sea
... the dense shade, in the spaces, runs
to hydrogen
laconic as its dull copulars.*

You cannot see what is said in these lines. They sound strong, and are, arguably, both scientific and sensuous. Yet they seem to have lost touch with the world. They seem too deliberate.

Composing on the same principle, Silkin can

³ *The Little Time-Keeper*. By JON SILKIN. Carcanet Press, £2.75, paper £1.75.

write lines as beautifully unproblematic as—

*Moss sprinkles its cry; in the bowed
fields of wheat, poppies
flutter themselves.*

Love, come on.

Or he can write as directly as in these lines which end an "Untitled Poem"—

*We will not last, love, as we are. Love,
I would have us stay, ever, like this.*

My conscience, my fear, and our sex, stir.

These lines are singular and authoritative in a way which the other lines I have quoted are merely singular. In removing himself from the laconic or ironic modes of writing most contemporary poets have come to consider debilitating, Silkin may have gone too far in the opposite direction and into a willed poetic manner. It has been brewing in his work for some time. His ability to impact one word on another in the creation of a sensuous idiom is not up for sacrifice. But it ought to be possible to retain it within a more direct form of writing. I note that, like Hughes, Silkin's music is all annotated below the stave. Both sound grand. I almost said "grandiose" which, being mischievous, is what I mean. Grandiose tones bother me. That, I think, is part of Silkin's weakness in this book. He has not lost touch with realities—a long poem about Australia in *The Little Time-Keeper* proves this effectively—but he may be in danger of losing touch altogether with their language.

SURVIVALS⁴ is Jim Howell's first collection. It is a curious mixture of bold gaucheness and real writing. He is still able to say, flatly, that something reminds him of something else. Blossoms are called "spendthrift", a word as common in bad poems as "threadbare." One poem begins with an artless, school composition

⁴ *Survivals*. By JIM HOWELL. Harry Chambers/Peterloo Poets, (8 Cavendish Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport, Cheshire SK4 3DN), £1.35.

⁵ *Mortal Fire*. By PETER DALE. Agenda Editions, (5 Cranbourne Court, Albert Bridge Road, London SW11 4PE), £3.75, paper £2.40.

line, "Of all trees I admire the hawthorn."

A wanly dignified northern melancholy is Howell's staple feeling. When he excites this into something actually threatening or accusatory, as in "About Chimneys" or "Street Corners", he suggests himself capable of the kind of poem I imagine he actually wants to write.

Although the lack of technique lets him down, his poems are truly peopled. His realism could be sharper, more menacing in its effects. He tells too much and should show more. Poems about the kind of environment Howell is concerned with need convincing pictures to make them real. The subject is still grugged in poetry, put down and rubbed out as "northern" or "provincial." For that reason they need craft and music and toughness of mind. They must give the impression that if someone tries to rub them out with a sneered remark they might get a thick ear. They are required to spit in Roy Fuller's eye. They are required not to have a chatty tone.

PETER DALE'S NEW BOOK is called *Mortal Fire*.⁵ You've heard the title before. Yes, he has already published a book called that. This is the expanded version, a selected poems, with revisions of the older ones. Mr Dale is concerned for his canon. He is not old and is already worried by posterity.

The book contains a verse-play, "Cell." Characters do talk in "lines", which, indeed, are blank. From time to time poets who would like to be dramatists break out in Shakespearean blank verse. The best that can be said of Mr Dale's inept play is that in writing it he has avoided the gorgeously mixed metaphors that plague its minor genre.

Dale's poems are a classic case of inconsistency. When he rhymes, he can write like this,

*Caught in scrutiny of a face
they lowered like a dog's in disgrace*

which, I submit, slithers well enough to aspire to the higher status of doggerel. Unrhymed imagist poems can be as memorable as "Summer", which has

*Clouds shift; the shadows fall.
Stallion gloss of sunlight
On a bough-back.*

EAST & WEST

How, and Why, Indira Rules

By Nirad C. Chaudhuri



MRS INDIRA GANDHI established her autocracy in India a year ago. The régime should be subjected to the same process of analysis and explanation as Fascism and Nazism have been going through in retrospect, but did not when they held Italy and Germany in their power. Wisdom after the event is not to be denigrated if it can be used to deal with coming events. Unfortunately, the West is not showing any capacity or readiness to apply even a small part of the knowledge it has acquired about the Fascist and Nazi régimes at a terrible cost to understand similar phenomena in

the non-European parts of the world, although these are creating evils compared with which European imperialism was the lesser evil.

Of course, the West has not accepted Mrs Gandhi's régime wholly. It is still a subject of controversy. But this is going on around three questions which are mere talking points without any relevance to the problem of understanding what has really happened.

1. The first question, whether there really was a subversive movement to justify the drastic steps Mrs Gandhi took, is pointless, because it is impossible to discover the truth about it. All dictatorships have put forward such stories.

2. Equally pointless is the question of democracy in India. There is no single criterion of democracy, and by one—overwhelming and

passionate popular support—the régimes of Mussolini and Hitler were as democratic as parliamentary government in Britain, perhaps more so. Mrs Gandhi can not only lay claim to ready submission to her authority, but can also say that the emergency was proclaimed, the government is being run, and civil liberties have been suppressed in complete accordance with the formal provisions of the Indian constitution, which was acclaimed as very democratic.

3. Her régime can also take credit for improvements in administration and conditions of living. But those who justify it by these are incredibly naïve. All these improvements do not make up a fraction of what Mussolini and Hitler brought about. The calamitous deterioration which makes these appear like boons was itself the product of prolonged governmental inefficiency and negligence. Even in 1970 the conditions were bad (and whenever my wife complained to shopkeepers about the prices or the quality of goods, or about their absence in the shops the uniform answer was: *Indirako puchho*—"Ask Indira"). Bragging about such pitiful amelioration as has been seen reminds me of the Bengali proverb: Kill a man's cow and claim his gratitude by giving him a pair of shoes made with her skin. . . .

This cat-and-dog chase in words will not make the present political situation in India intelligible, nor create respect in India for the insight and intelligence of Western observers. Nor will the assumption of an impartial pose and exhibition of readiness to hear Mrs Gandhi's case earn her goodwill. So far, these gestures and even the apologia on her behalf by British journalists and politicians have only made her accusations against the British Press more shrill and peevish. The intention behind this is easy to understand, and that is to frighten it to leave the régime alone. The only thing which will make Mrs Gandhi respect foreign observers is the demonstration that they have seen through her. That will not, of course, frighten her, for she has long ceased to care about outside opinion. But at all events that will deprive her of the satisfaction of having advocates for herself in the West and despising them at the same time.

IF ALL THESE ARGUMENTS and counter-arguments are futile, any fact-finding mission to India will not be of greater help. It will only get tainted information from the Government as well as its enemies. Those who have some idea of the reality will not speak. As things stand, it is impossible to find out how much repression is being actually exercised. The only thing which will be seen clearly is the fear of the régime, which may have been created by the simple exhibition of the determination to be ruthless. In India fear

of the State is something like financial credit. Besides, foreign observers will be misled by their ignorance or bias.

Fortunately, even without reliable information about current conditions, it is possible to explain how Mrs Gandhi has acquired her power and what are its nature and basis, because the broad facts of Indian politics since 1947, about which there is no doubt, shed full light on it. When considered objectively, these will show that, given the régime which was established in India with independence and the conditions in which it worked, Mrs Gandhi's régime is a natural though pathological development from Nehru's government, instead of being a reaction from it. That is, just as she is his daughter, so is her autocratic authority the offspring of her father's authority. The descent is incontestable, though the filiation has been obscured by certain assumptions, which might be described as sheer illusion.

THE SHOCK which Mrs Gandhi's action produced was due to the belief that government in India after independence was democratic in the Western sense. This became an *idée fixe* in Britain and also in the United States. In the British people this was so extraordinary that I once wrote in a Calcutta newspaper: "The current British opinion on the success of parliamentary democracy in India is not only pathetic, but actually contemptible, for it is a recantation of all their previous convictions" (18 September 1966).

Never from the days of Clive to almost the last days of British rule did anyone in Britain believe that India could be successfully governed except by an authoritarian régime. Even Lord Morley declared on the question of responsible government in India that fur coats were not for the tropics. As to parliamentary government, the Simon Commission (which consisted of seven distinguished British parliamentarians among whom was Attlee) pronounced as follows in their report published in 1930:

"British parliamentarism in India is a translation, and even in the best translations the essential meaning is apt to be lost. We have ourselves in attending the debates in the Assembly and provincial councils been more impressed with their difference than their resemblance to the Parliament we know."

This opinion was expressed when, with the Swarajist Party in the central legislature, Indian parliamentary ability was seen at its best. But all the convictions gained from experience were thrown overboard in 1947, and India began to be called the largest democracy in the world.

This *volte-face*, intellectually worthless as it was, had behind it an emotional compulsion. The British people refused to accept the fact that the

withdrawal from India was the final winding up of a business which had gone bankrupt, but wanted to believe that it had been put on a footing which would make it a prosperous concern. Therefore, the Indian government of India was given an Anglomorph image. The Americans for their part could not go on pouring money into India without believing that India was becoming Americamorphic. Such self-deception was bound to exact its price, and that is being paid. The United States is the most hated country of the world in India, and the United Kingdom is the most despised.

YET THE TRUTH should have been evident to anyone who had eyes to see, and brains to understand what he was seeing. A rough anticipation of what was likely to come out of the existing political situation could also be formed from the course of events from 1947 onwards. To prove that, I shall quote from some of my old writings in which (correctly, as it happened) I appraised the various situations. I do not do so to demonstrate any exceptional insight, but only to show that the real character of Indian politics since independence could be perceived by anyone who would not gratuitously deceive himself and court disillusionment.

From the beginning of the era of independence I could see that government in India was the personal autocracy of Nehru, only veiled by his liberalism. As it happened, I was the first in India to discuss the question: "After Nehru, Who?" in an article published in *The Illustrated Weekly of India* for 10 May 1953. In it I described Nehru's government as a plebiscitary dictatorship. I never revised that opinion. For instance, in a long interview on BBC 2 (put out on 1 April 1972), I said: "India is not the *biggest democracy in the world*. So far as it [this democracy] operated as a government during the lifetime of Nehru it did so as a dictatorship. The only person who did not know that was Nehru himself, all else knew it."

But I also pointed out in the 1953 article that Nehru's dictatorship owed very little to Western methods. Analysing the basis of his power, I said that the first element in it was his quasi-religious status as the leader of the Indian masses, which had descended to him from Mahatma Gandhi in a sort of apostolic succession. The next element was his leadership, by virtue of his social status and Western education, of the entire Westernised intelligentsia, among whom were the highly Anglicised officials and officers on whom rested the government of the country. The last element was his status in the outside world. On the one hand, he was acceptable, and indeed almost worshipped, as the modern

representative of India in the West. On the other, he was the most eminent representative of the non-European world and the voice of its nationalism. There was no one else in India who did or could combine all these roles. So did he become an autocrat.

This was not only inevitable but also desirable. When India got her independence in 1947 there were no moral or intellectual ideas to inspire any kind of progressive government, nor any political organisation to ensure efficient government. Even by 1920 Indian nationalism had been eroded of all positive content and had become mere hatred of British rule. Thus Independence left a vacuum of passion, only partly filled by the hatred of Pakistan.

Secondly, whatever political and economic thinking existed in the country was superficial and imitative. It existed only as a dissolvent of British rule and was therefore quite incoherent. The Indian intelligentsia never felt the internal political situation or the economic realities for what they were, but saw both only in the light of their grievances against the British. Thus there were no differing ideologies which could create genuine political parties. Only nationalism could; and the party of nationalism, in the very nature of things, could only be monolithic.

Thirdly, the only guarantee behind any kind of effective government in India could be the civil service and the armed forces. As these were formed under British rule, they had no political ideology, and cared only for their vested material interests. Thus personality was indispensable.

But it was in this respect that an ominous situation made its appearance in India after 1947. Nehru was in a position of unrivalled power. But he was already fifty-eight. Under him were a number of senior Congress leaders who had acquired an all-India standing in the course of the nationalist movement, and could have been expected to take over Nehru's function in commission, so to speak. But they were all older than Nehru. I have in my possession a letter of Nehru (written on 7 April 1939) in which he described their physical condition at that time:

"I know personally [Nehru wrote] that, for personal reasons if no others, a good number of our Ministers would like the Ministry to go so that they might have some rest from the burden they have been carrying [from the middle of 1937]. They are worn out in mind and body and their troubles from all directions tend to increase. I would hate to have their job."

Yet in 1947 he formed his government with some of these very men. Nearly all of them suffered from cardiac trouble throughout their tenure of office. In any case, all of them died before Nehru.

In the background was a void which was more dangerous. I said (in my 1953 article) that even

as routine political leader nobody could be expected to take Nehru's place, because after 1900 an extraordinary decline in the generic process of the emergence of potential leaders set in in India. Only two men born after 1900 acquired an all-India standing by 1947. Even of these, one died in 1953 and the other became ineffectual by 1964. The number of those who were born before 1900 and had that standing was also declining. There were 15 in 1920, nine in 1938, five or six in 1947, and none in 1964, though personal leadership had become indispensable. Anticipating such a situation, I wrote in 1953: "All this raises the question of *What, after Nehru?*, by comparison with which *Who, after Nehru?* is more or less a trivial question."

IT WAS OBVIOUS to all Indians who knew their country and people that there could be no government in it without personal authority, and also that the person had to possess a moral aura. But no one besides Nehru could be seen who had that sort of stature. To me this appeared so disquieting that in a 1957 article entitled "Personality Cult in Indian Politics" I wrote:

"The really dangerous prospect for the country is that there will be no person big enough to be the object of the personality cult . . . and after Nehru, as things are, nobody will be able to say, as he can with perfect right—*L'état, c'est moi*. The time has really come for a revivification of personality in Indian politics, and not its denunciation."

There is clear evidence that before Independence, in spite of his extreme repugnance to personal power, Nehru was convinced that it was indispensable for the success of the nationalist movement. Accordingly he sacrificed his own opinions and convictions and submitted to Mahatma Gandhi unreservedly. He gave his reason in the same letter of 1939, quoted above.

"Obviously it is wrong to give all power to one individual whoever he might be. Obviously it is wrong for a group to have a vested interest in power in an organisation. But one has to take all facts as they are and the outstanding fact of India is the vast influence of Gandhiji with the masses and people generally and his capacity to further India's cause. It seems to me to be folly to discard this or weaken it."

More remarkably still, he thought that Gandhi's power had to be accepted in the interest of the unity of India, though in 1939 British rule was quite effectively maintaining that unity. But Nehru seems to have had in mind what might happen when the British were gone. He went on to say:

"It seems to me to be greater folly to produce conditions which, however logically justified, would lead us to disunity when the greatest strength was needed. My mind was full of what was happen-

ing in other parts of the world, West and East, where internal disruption and disunity have broken up countries. I dared not do anything which might result in a like development in India. I fear that India is going China's way, which means internal trouble on a vast scale for years and years. I want to avoid that in so far as I can."

THIS LINE OF THINKING became clouded over in his mind after Independence, although his autocratic position in the Indian State was only a continuation of Gandhi's autocracy in the nationalist movement taken to a governmental level. He failed to see that his own position and power were needed for the same reasons as for Gandhi's, and disapproved of the principle. Thus in 1957, when the question of electing a President, Vice-President, and Prime Minister arose, he declared publicly that he thought it undesirable that the same set of people should be elected to the same offices term after term. He took his own election as unavoidable, and observed that as a matter of hard fact it was in some ways inevitable.

Nehru's reluctance to face his dictatorial position was a disaster for India. In this he showed the Indian intellectual's typical incapacity to make reality, action, and opinion hang together. The whole of the Indian intelligentsia wanted a leader at heart, felt disquieted about the future when Nehru would not be there, recognised that there was no one to take his place, and yet kept up a parrot's chorus about "democracy."

Thus the course of Indian politics ran relentlessly towards a vacuum; and since nature abhors it, the vacuum created by the disappearance of the benevolent personal power of Nehru has been filled up by a different kind of personal power. His daughter has acquired it after a tussle for power lasting over nine years. How she has done that has now to be considered.

Mrs Gandhi's Advent

A FRENCH HISTORIAN ONCE wrote a classic work of history: *L'Avènement de Bonaparte*, in which he showed how an unknown young man became the autocratic ruler of France. A similar book might be written about Mrs Gandhi, with this difference that the autocrat in this case is not a genius, has no achievement, and will not satisfy any unsatisfied national aspiration. But the similarity lies in the fact that just as Napoleon replaced a set of discredited leaders of the Revolution, Mrs Gandhi has replaced the discredited Congress leaders.

When Nehru died on 27 May 1964, Mrs Gandhi had no political standing whatever, and it was reported that she contemplated retirement into private life. She had indeed been made President of the Congress in 1959, but that was taken only as a gesture to her father. To him, she

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was only the sweet daughter; and, strangely enough, that was also the popular idea of her. Thus she did not start even as a political "dark horse." This gives the measure of her success, and also of the real character of Indian politics since the death of Nehru.

Nobody will dispute the proposition that politics is basically a struggle for power between nations, classes, or persons; and Indian politics went down to that bedrock in 1964. All that has happened since that date is the unfolding of a contest of power between one individual and a caucus, with policies, measures, and promises for better government or welfare of the people of India solely as weapons in the rivalry.

The struggle began with the caucus in power, because in India the sole alternative to an autocratic ruler is an oligarchy. The only people who could take over after the death of Nehru were the surviving Congress leaders, both in the government and the Party organisation. As it happened, they were men without any hold on the imagination of the people, and they had risen to office or a dominant position in the Congress Party by virtue of seniority alone. They had no outstanding record even in the nationalist movement.

Nevertheless, they took over because nothing better was available. But the office of Prime Minister gave rise to a problem. Not a single individual in the oligarchy could claim a decisive superiority over the others so as to become Prime Minister without rousing jealousy. Only one of them had acquired the reputation of being a strong man by fanatically pursuing some Hindu crotchets in Bombay. He was Morarji Desai. However, the others were distrustful of his ambition. Besides, he had the disqualification of being a Gujarati, when no one who did not belong to the Hindi-speaking block could be acceptable as the head of the Government of India. Therefore the choice fell on Lal Bahadur Shastri, a good man from the U. P. He was a mediocrity, but had acquired an unusual moral reputation as an Indian politician by taking responsibility for a number of serious accidents and resigning his office as Railway Minister.

He headed a wholly undistinguished government, of which Mrs Gandhi also became a member only out of respect for the dynastic principle and the desire to retain the association with the Nehru family. She was given the minor post of the Minister of Information and Broadcasting.

This government acquired an unexpected prestige by going to war with Pakistan in 1965. Though the military operations were indecisive they at least wiped out the disgrace of the defeat of 1962 in the war with China. After that the people of India were ready to believe that a government constituted by traditional Hindus

was better than one headed by a Westernised man like Nehru, who was suspected of being "soft" with the Muslims and Pakistan. But Shastri died at Tashkent on 11 January 1966. The increased respect for him could be judged from the fact that rumours got about that he had been poisoned. In India, when a popular figure dies untimely, it is assumed that he has been removed by rivals.

The other Congress leaders, both inside and outside the government, then chose Mrs Gandhi as Prime Minister. Apparently, they were influenced by a number of considerations of immediate advantage: as the daughter of Nehru she was not likely to rouse jealousies but on the contrary bring prestige to the government; for the same reason she would be an electoral asset; lastly, and perhaps this was the strongest reason, she would be a mere figurehead amenable to their control, and thus the caucus would really govern and for the first time make the Congress organisation, and not an individual, the ruling power in the country. Desai challenged the decision, but was defeated and was left out of the new government.

The Congress bosses had, however, reckoned without the host and were completely mistaken in their calculations. From the first day Mrs Gandhi showed her determination, as Queen Victoria did at the age of seventeen, to exercise her formal power in reality. Thus began a struggle for power which was finally decided in her favour last year.

IN THE MONTHS FOLLOWING her selection as Prime Minister, whenever Mrs Gandhi showed her independence, the Congress leaders felt irritated and uttered such remarks as "She is digging her own grave . . ." (reported to me at the time by one who heard it). But in this contest she was in the stronger position because she had the powers of State in her hand whereas her rivals had only the party organisation. She alone could give to the people what they wanted, and the others could not even outbid her in promises. The strongest passion of the Indian people in the domestic sphere was hatred of all the wealthy and privileged classes, especially of the Bania order which dominated industry and business. Mrs Gandhi could exploit this hatred; her rivals, on the contrary, were assumed to be with the capitalists, which in fact many of them were. Thus the demagogic slogan of "Socialism" became almost her monopoly. Over and above, she represented the Hindi-speaking people, while all her important rivals came from non-Hindi groups. The only thing that Mrs Gandhi lacked at the time was the certainty of having the exceptional powers of the State vested in the President on her side.

For just over a year no conflict developed in spite of the maladjustment. But the situation took a new turn at the beginning of 1967. Morarji Desai again challenged Mrs Gandhi's leadership. He lost, but compelled her to accept him as Deputy Prime Minister and give him the very important office of Finance Minister. This was generally regarded as a setback for her. I was then in England, and in the course of an interview for the BBC's news service was asked two questions: whether Morarji Desai and Mrs Gandhi would work harmoniously together; then, whether Morarji was really "the strong man of India" as he was believed to be in the West generally. To both the questions I answered with No's. I thought that the two were so different in character, ideology, and social affiliations that their alliance could not be expected to last; and I did not believe that Desai had any real strength of character.

Another source of weakness for Mrs Gandhi at the time was believed to be her proposal to make a Muslim, Dr Zakir Husain, President of India. This could not be popular; and knowing this a French journalist who had made a close study of Indian politics and was travelling to India in the same plane, asked: "Why is Mrs Gandhi behaving in this way? She seems to be working for her fall. . . ." Actually, she won, and Dr Husain was elected President.

IT BECAME EVIDENT TO ME as soon as I returned to India, as it should have been to all who were following the political developments with detachment, that Mrs Gandhi was firmly in the saddle and her rivals in the Congress had no chance against her. This (in an article published on 15 May 1967) I wrote: "Against all expectations, she has established herself. Nothing can belittle this achievement of hers. . . . The simple fact is that the men who were assumed to be strongest in the Congress have been ousted by a person who was considered to be leader only by courtesy."

But Morarji Desai as Finance Minister could obstruct socialistic measures, which would have given greater popularity to Mrs Gandhi; and for the moment she could not afford to challenge him, because the members of the so-called Junta or Syndicate were also not reconciled to her dominance. But the latent struggle for power came to a head when Zakir Husain suddenly died (in June 1969), and the question of a new President arose. The Congress caucus supported the candidature of S. Reddy, and Mrs Gandhi that of V. V. Giri, who was already Vice-President. However, the Congress Parliamentary Board nominated Reddy, and in fury Mrs Gandhi prepared to have her revenge. Exercising her power as Prime Minister she struck first at

Morarji Desai and deprived him of his post as Finance Minister. The Press then commented that Mrs Gandhi had taken a "very dangerous" step. But Morarji accepted his defeat and went out of the government ignominiously.

Mrs Gandhi had removed Desai in order to deliver a master stroke of demagoguery, and she did that by nationalising the banks on 19 July 1969. But in this phase of her struggle with the Congress caucus she observed the utmost discretion, amounting almost to cunning, in her manoeuvres. She kept the intention to nationalise the banks so secret that the Congress leaders were deceived and circulated reports that nationalisation of the banks would not take place "for a long time." Moreover, with the intention of avoiding disciplinary action by the Congress Parliamentary Board by opposing their nomination of Reddy, she publicly declared that she had accepted the decision of the Board without reservation and would support it. However, it was Giri who was elected, and everybody guessed how. After this defeat for the caucus the Congress split. But a majority remained with Mrs Gandhi, the winner, and the dissidents became a rump.

The contest was ended by August 1969; and from that time, with the President on her side, Mrs Gandhi had nothing to fear from the opposition within the Congress. Threat to her

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power could come only from discontent created by maladministration and economic distress in the country. This deterioration took place. But she regained her popularity by satisfying the strongest passion of the Indian people: their hatred of Pakistan. She went to war with that country and dismembered it.

If she had followed this up by toning up the administration, checking corruption, and improving the economic situation her popularity would have made her power wholly secure; and she could have become the benevolent plebiscitary dictator of India like her father. But this was not done, and for the simple reason that good government in itself has never been an issue in Indian politics since 1947, and more especially after the death of Nehru. On the other hand, the inherent slackness in administration and the general inertia of Indian life worsened the internal situation to such an extent that discontent increased. To counteract this the atomic explosion was staged, and by satisfying the vicarious megalomania of the Indian people Mrs Gandhi was able to obtain a respite for herself. But this too came to an end, and more serious opposition to her power made its appearance in some provinces. Those who were against her even challenged her power at the centre by means of mass agitation.

THIS IN ITSELF WOULD NOT have made Mrs Gandhi resort to such an extreme step as she took in June 1975. She and her Congress colleagues could deal with that sort of situation with the power which she already had in her hands and by manoeuvres which had been standardised in order to deal with the parties in opposition. But a very grave threat arose from a judicial decision which, if obeyed, would have ended her formal power as Prime Minister. The opposition showed every disposition to exploit this sudden assistance to them. Mrs Gandhi was placed in such a position that she could not gain a respite by delaying the judicial process; for in India people react strongly to any sign of loss of power and position, and desert the side which seems to be losing. So she had to strike hard at the organisers of the opposition to her. She did that with the help of the powers of the President which were at her disposal. The President of India was made to sign the declaration of emergency in the early hours of the morning, before the crowing of the cock could disperse the powers of darkness. And by the time the bird brought in the morning, Mrs Gandhi had restored her position by striking terror into the whole of the country.

SUCH A TYRANNY as Mrs Gandhi has established and is sustaining cannot be without a firm basis in the mental and social life of the

Indian people. To say that it is merely imposed by terror would be like arguing the same untenable thesis about the power of Hitler or Mussolini. Therefore it is necessary to examine what passions and social forces as well as traits of character are supporting her régime.

Mrs Gandhi's success is due in the first instance to her own character. Normally, upper-class Westernised Indians are too clever by half, and are devoid of courage of any kind. Mrs Gandhi, in spite of her Westernised education and upbringing, is obstinately courageous. A few years ago, in a political commentary published in an Indian newspaper, I said that there were five thousand women in New Delhi alone who could make better Prime Ministers than she. I meant they had the intellectual qualifications. But in the same piece I also compared Mrs Gandhi to Marie-Antoinette and to the Czarina Alexandra Feodorovna; perhaps she can also be compared to Empress Eugénie. I am not sure that, like those women, Mrs Gandhi is actuated by a philoprogenitive interest. But one thing is certain. She has enough love of power herself to be capable of doing what she has done for her own sake. Her courage is the self-assurance of a spoilt child who has always had everything she wanted, and cannot conceive of deprivation. When she got the Prime Ministership as a windfall she became Racine's Phèdre and could cry out that what she had inside herself was not a simple desire, but *Vénus tout entière à sa proie attachée*, only substituting love of power for Venus. No one who has not lived in Hindu society can realise what an advantage such a passion can give to an individual over fellow men. Yet the English in India had perceived that in the eighteenth century. Orme, for instance, wrote: "In Indostan every man may literally be said to be the maker of his own fortune. Great talents, unawed by scruples of conscience, seldom fail of success."

But Mrs Gandhi did not have the talents, only the will; the intelligence needed was supplied by others. It amounted to cunning, and it came from the Westernised upper-middle-class men in her entourage. I am sure that every move in her conflict with the Congress bosses was made at the prompting or counsel of these men, whose subtlety the lower-middle-class traditional Congress politicians could not match. Mrs Gandhi's success is to be seen as the product of an unusual combination in modern India. During British rule, intelligence and strength of character had become separated in social classes. In this case they again came together.

BUT THIS SUPPORT could not have been hers unless there were two close ties between her and upper-

class Westernised Indians. The first was the bond of class feeling. Mrs Gandhi is of the class to which the civil servants and the officers belong; her opponents are of lower-middle-class origins and are traditional. As it happened, Lal Bahadur Shastri was shrewd enough to have a perception of the class distinction. One day, when presiding over a meeting as a minister, he offered a cigarette to the Permanent Secretary, who was a member of the old I.C.S. The official very politely declined. Shastri smiled and observed: "Oh, I forgot that you don't smoke my brand of cigarettes." After that the official felt compelled to take one.

Secondly, there is complete identity of interest between Mrs Gandhi and the Westernised upper class. This class has become the legatees of British rule, and its members have the same privileges as the British had in India. The whole body of officials and officers of the armed services, who are the mainstay of government in India, belong to the same class. None of them could feel safe with the lower-middle-class politicians. Actually, they despised and laughed at these upstarts of power.

A PART FROM THESE COMMON BONDS, Mrs Gandhi has brought them some amelioration of the material conditions of living about which they had become anxious. This class never felt for the poverty of the people, but they began to complain for themselves from 1974. I then heard that, for the first time in known history, families with an income of above Rs. 2,000 a month were feeling the pinch. Mrs Gandhi's economic measures, such as they are, have reduced the strain. As the class, consisting of the officials, officers, professionals, managers, and technicians, has no idealism whatever and is grossly materialistic Mrs Gandhi has forged a new link with them.

Furthermore, she has brought them psychological satisfaction. The officials had become resentful of two affronts to their authority. In the secretariats they could no longer control or overawe the clerks, because on the one hand they claimed the democratic right to shirk work and be insubordinate; and, on the other, they belonged to the class from which the ministers came. In the districts the magistrates and the judges were bullied by the local Congress bosses and resented that extremely, because they looked upon the bosses as low adventurers out to make money. All these lower orders have been put in their place. Mrs Gandhi has also pleased the entrepreneurial class by checking the slackness and insolence of the workmen.

Furthermore, she has gained the support of the police, on whom rests the day-to-day task of

maintaining her power, by restoring to them the power and prestige which they had in British days, but which they were losing increasingly owing to the readiness of the politicians to truckle to the populace. In the new régime the police have regained their capacity to inspire fear in the people. But the satisfaction is not entirely selfish. Many police officers, even of the lower ranks, were coming to feel that the individualistic anarchy inherent in the people of the country was threatening all government. They regretted their helplessness in checking this.

In the light of all this, Mrs Gandhi's contest with her rivals should be seen as the expression of a class conflict. It came into existence with independence, but remained dormant on account of the presence of Nehru. With his death it came to the surface, and simmered till 1975. Now one class has won, at least for the time being.

The two classes are, then, the Anglicised upper-middle class, which ran the machinery of government, and the traditional lower-middle-class, to which the great majority of the Congress politicians belonged. In the administrative sphere it was inevitable that when the British withdrew from India the power of the State would pass into the hands of the Anglicised class, because only they could run the government and were entrenched in it. On the other hand, politically, it was equally inevitable that the direction of the State would pass into the hands of the lower-middle-class Congress politicians who had carried on the nationalist agitation.

The primary concern of both the classes was promotion of material interests, or in plain words making money. But the concepts and methods were different in them. The Anglicised class wanted stability in prosperity on the strength of high salaries, the politicians aimed at getting rich quickly by using their political position to make money by any means, and mainly by corrupt methods. This naturally created concern among the upper class because they were bound to feel that the politicians were bent on killing the golden goose.

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The conflict was not allowed to burst into the open by the position of Nehru who was the leader of both the classes, and who in all practical matters of government was on the side of the Anglicised class. In fact, Nehru was the only guarantee behind the vested interests of this class. When he died, their dominance was threatened. It has again been made safe by Mrs Gandhi, and they have every reason to support her. Actually, it is the support of the Westernised class which constitutes the only effective guarantee of Mrs Gandhi's power. The present régime in India is as much the régime of Anglicised Hindus as of Mrs Gandhi.

As for popular support, she has all the appearance of having that too. But in India those who have had power have always commanded obedience and submission of the people, and that normally has all the outward appearance of spontaneity and enthusiasm. But these also disappear quickly as soon as power is lost. Then the autocrat who had become the idol of the people is not regretted or venerated even in retrospect. Those who make much of "popular support" in the East should remember the case of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Before giving their genuine respect and obedience the Indian people have required moral elevation and holiness. Mrs Gandhi cannot, of course, evoke this respect like Mahatma Gandhi; but owing to the fact that she is a woman in power, she can create an *ersatz* religious aura about herself. In Hinduism, power in the divine order has for centuries been identified, not with a male god, but with a female one. The Mother Goddess of Hinduism is the embodiment and source of power, and she has two forms—the benevolent Durga and the terrifying Kali. The Hindus have never been afraid of the terrible aspect of Kali, which they think is only for the enemies of the Hindus. At present Mrs Gandhi certainly appears to her people like Durga the benevolent. I have actually heard the word *Shakti* (Power personified) applied to her. But

this feeling is exiguous, and dependent upon her power.

As for strength from any kind of ideology, it has to be clearly registered that her position has no resemblance whatever to that of Hitler or Mussolini; that is, she has no appeal for the Indian people, or even for the intelligentsia, as a leader who can satisfy strongly felt and unrealised national aspirations or can recover for the people some lost position. But that is no disadvantage for her, because the Indian people have no such aspirations themselves, and are quite contented with "liberation from foreign rule."

None the less, Mrs Gandhi has a particular kind of emotional hold. She can satisfy, as I have suggested, the vicarious megalomania of the Indian people, which does not need any concrete achievement to nourish itself. In its positive aspect it makes them believe that they are morally superior to all other nations and can do no wrong; and in the negative it displays itself in the obsessive notion that the rest of the world is bent on belittling and misrepresenting India. But she can do this because she herself shares it fully. More especially, she participates in the anti-British and anti-American sentiment of the Westernised class.

In the domestic field her ideas have never gone beyond the unreal shibboleths which have dominated Indian political and economic thinking since independence. But this has been no disadvantage for her, because in this she is completely identified with the people of India, especially the intelligentsia. The very absence of living ideas has created a new bond between her and the classes which support her.

Over and above all this, her power is backed by the general leaning towards authoritarianism of all Hindus. Hindu society has never known social freedom, and has been regimented throughout history. This submission to authority is natural to the Hindus; they actually prefer an authoritarian régime. Since 1947 I have constantly heard observations from my fellow-Hindus: "We need a dictator." They did not regard Nehru as one, on account of his liberalism. To them he was only King Log; this he really was, and so they have now got King Stork.

MRS GANDHI'S DICTATORSHIP is not of the kind which answers the ideal of auto-cracy which the people of India cherish, and therefore will not create a form of government more suited to the aptitudes of the masses. It will be an imposed authority, and will therefore be dependent on the continuance of her hegemony as naked power. Again, the continuance will depend on the maintenance of her alliance with the Wes-

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ternised class and of economic improvement. The alliance might be weakened by some action on her part which would be considered too personal, while the economic improvement will remain subject to two ineluctables of human existence in India; namely, the inherent inertia of the Indian people and the vagaries of the Indian climate. Furthermore, the classes not with her might not regard their defeat as final.

For all these reasons Mrs Gandhi cannot afford to relax the suppression of freedom, or to be conciliatory. Both will be interpreted as weakness, when to remain in power she has to keep up the impression of ruthlessness. Clearly, she is determined to remain on that course.

THE TRUE COMPLEXION of her régime is perfectly easy to see. All the chicanery which is being spun round it is not necessary to make it intelligible, for the principle of diagnosing what it is was

formulated long ago. What has happened in India is simply the fulfilment of Plato's law that tyranny inexorably follows democracy. The vices exhibited by the Indian democracy established in 1947 surpassed all that was described by Plato. That may be admitted. But this also is axiomatic: that the particular remedy is no better than the disease.

If the history of India reveals anything it shows that in the creation of civilisation the achievements of the Indian people have never been political or economic—they have come only from the mind. Even by the time Independence came the Indian mind had been brought by its chauvinism to the verge of paralysis. Mrs Gandhi's régime may well kill it. In India today not even Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, or her father Jawaharlal Nehru may be quoted when in bright moments of Indian history they have spoken out for freedom.

AUTHORS

Milton Friedman is Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago. Among his many books are *Capitalism & Freedom* (1962), *A Monetary History of the United States* (1963), *Inflation: Causes and Consequences* (1963) and *There Is No Such Thing As A Free Lunch* (1975). His article in this issue was adapted from a recent talk given at the Brigham Young University. He writes a regular column for *Newsweek*.

George Watson is Lecturer in English, University of Cambridge, and a Fellow of St John's College. His article was delivered as the annual St John's College, Cambridge, lecture at the University of Hull. He is editor of *The New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* and author of a study of Victorian politics, *The English Ideology* (Allen Lane, 1973). His previous articles in *ENCOUNTER* include: "Were the Intellectuals Duped?" (December 1973) and "Was the New Left a Success?" (October 1975).

Hugh Seton-Watson is Professor of Russian History, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London. His books include *The East European Revolution* (1950), *The Pattern of Communist Revolution* (1953), *The New Imperialism* (1961), and *The Russian Empire* (1967). The article "A Conversation with George Kennan" in the September issue originated in a series of broadcasts on Radio Free Europe. Hugh Seton-Watson's article in this number is similarly based on a discussion with George Urban.

Raymond Aron is Professor at the Collège de France and the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, and is a regular columnist for *Le Figaro*. His previous

articles in *ENCOUNTER* include "A Reply to Solzhenitsyn" (September 1975), "An Interview" (December 1973), and "The Quest for Meaning" (September 1972). His latest book is *History and the Dialectic of Violence* (Blackwell, 1975).

Jan Morris's third volume of collected travel essays, *Travels*, was published earlier this year by Faber & Faber. She writes regularly for *ENCOUNTER*, and many of these pieces are reprinted in the new book: "Singapore" (January 1975), "Hong Kong" (July 1974) and "A View of the Royal Navy" (March 1973).

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Dame Veronica Wedgwood is the noted English historian. She is the author of *The Thirty Years' War* (1938), *Montrose* (1952), *The King's Peace* (1955), *The King's War* (1958) and *The Trial of Charles I* (1964), among other books. She contributed a "Men & Ideas" piece on Jacob Burckhardt to the December 1959 issue.

George Ewart Evans has written many studies in oral history, all published by Faber & Faber, including most recently *The Days That We Have Seen* (1975) and *From Mouths of Men* (1976).

Nirad C. Chaudhuri is the author of *The Autobiography of an Unknown Indian* (1951), *A Passage to England* (1959), and *Clive of India* (Barrie & Jenkins, 1975). His various books and articles have established him as perhaps the best-known Indian writer of the day.

LETTERS

The Two Kennans

THE CONVERSATION between George Kennan and George Urban [ENCOUNTER, September] obtains its importance from the fact that Kennan is no ordinary American. The Left sees him as a reactionary the Right as a realist. I do not know about the first epithet; it is clear that the second is misapplied. For it seems to me that contrary to his reputation and to his own belief, Kennan too is an exponent of American ideology in politics, a point which would not have been made so crystal clear without Urban's subtle yet insistent questioning. Incidentally, of the two men, Urban possesses the greater understanding of human affairs, including those political. *He* is "the star", if I may say so, of the long and passionately interesting dialogue.

In the first part of the text, the reader finds a sensitive, vastly cultured scholar whose views this reader, at least, can entirely share. The astonishing thing happens in the second half—it is as if another interlocutor had taken over. All the Americano-ideological moral platitudes are served up again, from Woodrow Wilson to Harry Hopkins, from Roosevelt to Eisenhower and W. W. Rostow. Only a moral power has the right to conduct a vigorous policy against an immoral one. America should consult other countries what they want of her, and should do nothing else. Disarm, and trust God, and the enemies' sense of humanity. Why would Moscow want to bomb the United States when not only the bourgeoisie but the workers too would be destroyed? Etc. (Has Kennan ever heard of Soviet tanks crushing workers in East Berlin and Budapest?)

Kennan, the literate thinker, is of course a much more sophisticated man than the ones mentioned above. Yet he holds the same beliefs, indeed the beliefs of the 18th-century puritans, his ancestors, and the 20th-century puritans (also called Hippies and New Left). America must first "green" herself before she can rejoin the world, then naturally as its virtuous leader. The similarity of thought between Kennan and America's other self-flagellants is striking.

How can we explain that Kennan I (of the first part of the conversation) is able so smoothly to turn into Kennan II? Let us remember Dean Acheson's words in his memoirs, *Present at the Creation*:

The nature of the world around us in 1941 was one thing; American notions about it were quite another. Two contrary and equally unrealistic ideas about it competed for the national mind. . . .

The first was isolationism, the second

the dream of universal law and internationally enforced peace, embodied and embalmed in the League of Nations and resurrected in the United Nations.

No *mutatis mutandis* is necessary here: the "two contrary and equally unrealistic ideas" are present in

Kennan's mind too. Thus, ultimately, his advice (let America withdraw from world leadership) would be the best to follow—if this were not a sham, appropriately exposed by the African head of state whom he quotes: "You can't do that, you are caught!"

The conclusion that Urban was polite enough not to draw is this: the United States will continue exporting its ideological confusion, hence it will continue weakening its allies and strengthening its enemies. Again, we must be grateful to George Urban for eliciting Kennan's responses, indeed for cornering him. For if the State Department's "realist" thinks that way, what must be in the mind of its Utopians?

THOMAS MOLNAR

City University
New York

Margaret Cole Replies

OWING TO absence abroad I did not see Robert Wistrich's letter in your August issue, headed "Cole, Webb, Marx", until a day or two ago; and I hope you will allow me to take up one or two points.

I should like to mention, in advance, that Beatrice Webb was *not* a socialist when she undertook her East London studies. The process of her conversion was very gradual, as is made perfectly clear in the book *My Apprenticeship*, and was not completed until a very little while before her engagement to Sidney. It is not, therefore, reasonable to attack her for not behaving like a good socialist at the period under discussion.

I was, in my original letter (ENCOUNTER, May), defending Beatrice against a charge of "virulent anti-Semitism", in which I gather Mr Wistrich agrees with me. I was not trying to show her as having any particular sympathy with Jews: though, as the question has been raised, I may point out that many years later (in her *Diary* for 2 September 1929) she wrote definitely "I admire Jews", though she went on to criticise Zionism; and to my knowledge she had many friendships with Jews.

To return, however, to the conditions of the 1880s. Mr Wistrich's interpretation of what Beatrice Potter wrote is biased and unfair. She did observe, as no one could have helped observing, the close family organisation of the East End Jews whom she had studied, noting that that made them rather deficient in what she called "social morality", though they were definitely law-abiding and "contract-keeping"—meaning that they stuck to their word. But she also recorded some reasons for this, e.g. that they were, for the most part, fleeing from persecution in Russia and Poland, which encouraged family defensiveness; that the immigrants were, for the most part, originally brain-workers, who had had to descend to manual work and were trying to work upwards from that—the easiest way being to take to dealing of various kinds (which presupposes profit-making); and further, that in the very small area of Whitechapel which housed the tailoring trades, there was a plethora of "small

Life & Letters Today

Frankfurt-am-Main

FRUSTRATION FRUSTRATED: *It was once, and not so long ago, a big hit on the German scene of new word coinages. During the student excitement of the 1960s, nothing could have been heard more often on the lips of the young liberators than the slightly Germanised English word "frustration."* There was an exquisite hatefulness about it as it was uttered with the same feelings that it was supposed to represent: general disillusionment, bitterness, desperate aggressiveness, unhappiness.

Times pass, times change. Semantics stop for no man. The days of "frustration" were numbered. Nowadays one scarcely hears the word at all, not from young or old. Is nobody frustrated any more in Germany? Has the whole of our youth been liberated? Is everybody happy? Well, not exactly. But now they are, as in the good old days, merely disillusioned, or embittered, and sometimes desperately unhappy. True, that's not quite the same as being "frustrated." The word was imported because it was indeed untranslatable. We had the thing, but not the word. And now even that has disappeared, strangely and suddenly, from the national vocabulary. It's enough to make one ... frustrated.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

Washington, D.C.

FUN PROSE: *President Ford, reportedly unhappy with the quality of his speeches, has reshuffled his speech-writing staff.*

The White House press secretary said that four speech writers on the staff had left for other jobs.

President Ford was said to feel that a number of his speeches were not couched in the straightforward, simple rhetoric that he believes is his proper style. He is also said to have been concerned that some of the substance of his speeches emerged as policy decisions on which he had not reached a final decision.

Robert Orben, a speech writer and a former script writer for Red Skelton and Jack Paar [well-known Hollywood comedians], has been put in charge of speech-writing operations.

NEW YORK TIMES

New York City

WITH SUCH PARAMETERS, WHO NEEDS BOTTOMS? *This autumn Diahann Carroll starts her own television series. She says she is deliciously happy with her new 24-year-old husband and business partner Robert de Leon, who looks quietly handsome and says managerial things like "How do you get the most, creatively, within certain financial parameters, that's the bottom line."*

EVENING STANDARD

Bristol

SELF-CONTROL: *Customs investigators who inspected a consignment of 22,000 magazines from the United States found that 52 titles (16,400 magazines) were indecent or obscene, Mr Michael Coombe, for the prosecution, told a jury at Bristol Crown Court yesterday.*

The jury found Ben's Books Ltd, of New Bond Street, Mayfair, London, and Dennis Gerald Holloway, aged 25, its former managing director, guilty of fraudulently evading an order prohibiting the import of indecent or obscene magazines.

Judge Ewart James fined the company and Mr Holloway £750.

"It is an offence which has no redeeming feature about it whatsoever", the judge said. "The less I say about it the better or I may get carried away and say something I may regret later on."

THE TIMES

Sheffield

ILLEGITIMATE: *Peter Fitton, 39, and his wife Flora, 35, denied seventeen counts of possessing obscene articles of publication for gain at the Anglo-American Book Exchange, Spital Hill, Sheffield.*

Dr Pickard—one of the first expert witnesses to be called by the defence—who said she worked at Guy's Hospital, seeing patients with sexual problems, described the magazines as being useful in dissipating excess energy.

Mr Peter Back, Q.C., defending, who objected to seven women jurors, said he would call experts to show the therapeutic value of such publications. To some they may be unpleasant and distasteful but basically they could relieve tension by stimulating fantasy.

The woman doctor giving evidence on the therapeutic value of pornographic literature was admonished by the judge yesterday when she referred to monkeys as "little bastards." Judge Vivian Hurwitz, sitting at Sheffield Crown Court, told Dr Christine Pickard: "I know we live in a permissive society, but there are limits to the language which can be permitted in a court."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Washington, D. C.

WITH SUCH FRIENDS, WHO NEEDS SOCIOLOGISTS? *If the Democrats win the White House in November, the first and second ladies of the new Administration will almost certainly find each other compatible. Like Rosalynn Carter, Joan Mondale projects an image of self-control and personal dignity. "Their value systems are very similar," says a friend.*

NEWSWEEK

masters" rather than large-scale capitalists who would have been able to afford better conditions for their workers. But while noting this (which she says firmly is *not* intended to be a picture of the Jewish community in England as a whole) she also goes on to point out the great care which the community takes of its weaker members, and describes very favourably the Jewish Board of Guardians, contrasting it strongly with the English Boards existing under the 1834 Poor Law and saying how little the Jewish Board tried to treat the objects of their care as "paupers." She does, of course, recognise that industrial organisation might improve the immigrant's lot; but she calls, as much if not more strongly, for the government to extend and enforce Factory Acts. "The whole nation", as she said later, "is in fact the sweater." I do not think it is possible, from these articles and some others, if taken in conjunction with her own *Diary* (has Mr Wistrich studied it?) to find Beatrice Potter guilty of any anti-Semitism.

IT OUGHT FURTHER to be pointed out, in reply to Mr George Feaver's long letter (September), that it is quite wrong to equate anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism, particularly in those far-off days. Certainly, anti-Semites were opposed to Zionism; but the reverse was not, and still is not, correct. The argument about Zionism continues until this day. And animated retailing of "Jewish" stories, and discussion about distinguishing "Jewish" traits goes back, as every historian knows, for hundreds of years before the Webbs were born. The Chosen People, with their own specific rituals and taboos concerning so many details of everyday life, could hardly have expected otherwise. Their characteristics, as Mr Feaver has observed, interested the Webbs as students of society; but to observe that Sidney had "a Jewish nose" is not evidence of hostility towards Jews in general.

As to Mr Geltman's cross little postscript, what I wrote was that the *Soviet constitution did not contain anything about anti-Semitism*—so of course Beatrice did not find it there. For the Russian attitude to Jews in the early days of the Revolution Mr Geltman might do worse than look up the drawings in David Low's Russian Sketch Book, which was produced in 1932—the year in which the Webbs made their visit to the USSR. The "Gulag Archipelago" has nothing to do with the case—the American Constitution does not, I think, speak of Alcatraz or Attica. Or does Mr Geltman intend to say that anyone who supported the Soviets *at any time* was an anti-Semite? If so, he must possess a very large dossier of sinners.

One word more—on Engels. I have not been able to look up the letter to which reference was made; but, assuming that Engels was being factual and not propagandist, I would suggest that, as he was writing at a date different from the date of Beatrice Potter's investigations, he may well have been referring to a different part of the East End. Beatrice recognised and stated clearly the limits of her own study. And it is not, surely, surprising that in a book with so wide a coverage as *The History of Trade Unionism* the authors did not have space to mention every small development.

MARGARET COLE

London

Dr Spaceley-Trellis

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN (and teleologically was) too much to expect that someone of Michael Wharton's biased and élitist views would be able to do full justice to the wide-ranging plurality (the "ecumenicism of humanity") of the progressive initiatives of Dr Spaceley-Trellis, the Bishop of Bevincon (ENCOUNTER, September).

The inevitable *lacunae* reveal the impermissible gulf between the totally dissimilar *personae* (sic) of the writer and the written-about. It is significant that only once (in a minor reference to the public schools! p. 45) does Michael Wharton refer to the Bishop's totally committed approach to education and the applied science of social mechanics. Yet who does not know of the Spaceley-Trellis Foundation for the Abolition of Standards in Education? Who has not been illumined by the Bishop's *mot* "we are not interested in equality of opportunity but equality of result"? Who was not thrilled by the Dutt-Pauker Objective Marxist Report on Progressive Education in ILEA Primary Schools (the report so ably edited by Dr Heinz Kiosk and funded by the Episcopal Humanist Society for the Benefit of Illiteracy)? Who has not long acknowledged that Dr Spaceley-Trellis was the original conceptor of the Mixed Toilet in the Comprehensive School Movement?

One is saddened (though not in any sense *enragé*) by Mr Wharton's inability to comprehend the affective revolution in the taxonomy of the totality of teacher training made possible by the Bishop's personal supervision of curriculum development at Colleges of Education in the late '50s and early '60s and the consequent outflow to schools of persons no longer teachers (Socialist Paradise on Earth forbid!) but fun-loving, consensus-bringing, jeans-wearing, guitar-twanging, youth-centred Group Activities Co-ordinators with no fancy ideas about readin', ritin' or 'rithmetic but with a far-reaching, full, frank and fearless attachment to the Rights Without Responsibilities Egalitarian Throughput Association.

The infinitely relevant (yet vital and deeply compassionate) rejection of the arguments of Jensen and Eysenck achieved by the starkly simple Burning of Their Books Ceremony in the (appropriately named) Chapter House of Bevincon Cathedral gave sufficient proof of the "meaningful dialogue in education for this day and age", *for once* accurately described by Mr Wharton in his otherwise ontogenetically inaccurate—though phylogenetically perceptive—Side-view of Dr Spaceley-Trellis: that Leading Man of Our Time.

IAN DUNLOP

Assistant Chaplain to the
Churches Re-Education of England Programme
(CREEP)

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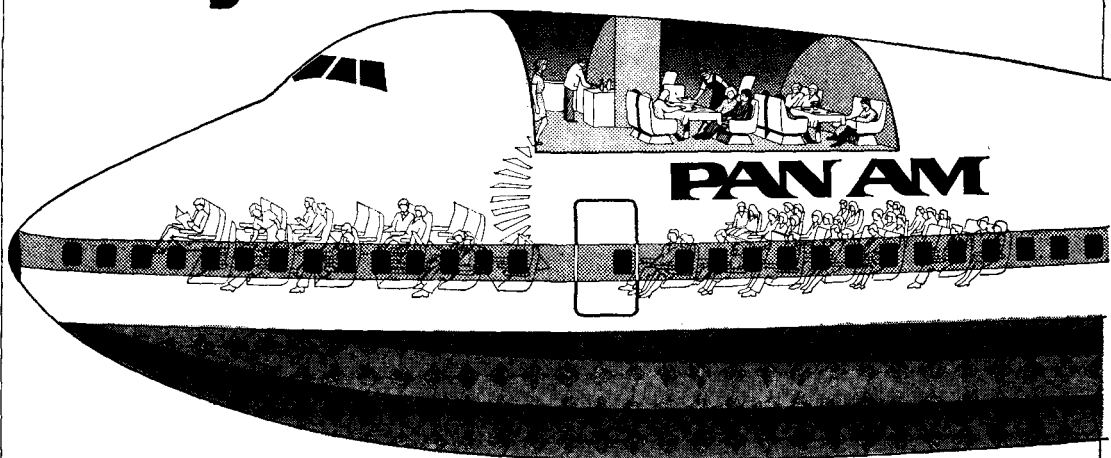
The Close Shop

Much Smattering, Lower Nerdley

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S. S. Prawer

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In this controversial book Ashley Montagu takes issue with the innate aggressionists – Konrad Lorenz, Robert Ardrey, Desmond Morris, and others – who by their writings have done so much to popularize the view that human beings are inescapably killers. He examines their arguments in detail and sets out to refute their conclusions, asserting instead that human behaviour is determined not by genes alone, for in specific circumstances people are capable of all manner of behaviour, but by the interaction of the individual's experience and his genetic constitution. Illustrated £6.25

The New Wave

Truffaut, Godard, Chabrol, Rohmer, Rivette

James Monaco

This book considers the work of the French film-makers who together constitute the New Wave. François Truffaut, Jean-Luc Godard, Claude Chabrol, Eric Rohmer, and Jacques Rivette were all critics connected in some way with the magazine *Cahiers du Cinéma* when in the late 1950s they turned to film-making. Truffaut and Godard receive the most discussion in this book, but whole chapters are devoted to each of the other directors. Illustrated £9.95

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